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JANUARY 1857.

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## ART. I.—WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

*William Wordsworth. A Biography.* By Edwin Paxton Hood.  
London: W. and F. G. Cash. 1856.

MR. HOOD'S life of Wordsworth is written with a violent desire to be transcendental. It indicates some real love for Wordsworth's poetry, and some confused insight into its character; but it is rendered extremely unpleasant and unreadable by agonising eloquence, and the strained mannerisms of an attitudinising philosophy. The style is grandiose, and the thought is hopelessly tangled, with now and then a gleam of true criticism; but for the rest, consisting of a bewildered mass of vague and half-seen analogies. Thus we are told of the "identity between the mind of Wordsworth and the mind of the ancient Pelasgian;" a supposed identity which is illustrated by a most trying burst of eloquence concerning the Pleiades and fair-haired blossoms, and love blotted out by gloom, and, in short, all the abysses. Again, we have a very long dissertation indeed on the essence of Grecian drama, only, as it appears, because Wordsworth *is* held to be Grecian, and *is not* held to be dramatic. The volume is fatally incoherent, and tainted throughout with that most painful of all literary plagues, the vanity of fine writing. We regret this the more, because there are not wanting in the book glimpses of really earnest personal conviction and genuine admiration for the theme; but these are all but smothered in the artificial excitements of the volcanic school of literature. We lay down the book with something not unlike, perhaps, what its author meant (if he had meaning) by that magnificent expression which he has discovered for us, "an awful hieroglyphic sigh."

It is strange that so gaudy an essay should have been written on such a theme. Coleridge, indeed, speaks of the "strange

mistake, so slightly grounded, yet so widely and industriously propagated, of Mr. Wordsworth's simplicity;" yet assuredly, though not, perhaps, in the sense in which Coleridge ridicules the assertion, the most striking characteristic of Wordsworth's mind and poetry is its essential simplicity. Simplicity of character, simplicity of purpose, simplicity of style, all mark Wordsworth in an extraordinary degree. His was a very strong plain character, and, considering its intellectual depth, remarkably circumscribed in its limits of emotion, taste, and sympathy; but within those limits balanced and harmonious, and distinguished from common characters of like simplicity by two remarkable gifts—a musing eye turned inwards on the depths of that simple life which, in other like-minded men, expresses itself only through outward interests,—and a passionate visionary love for all those living beings and objects and scenes which fed his contemplative humour and filled his imagination without imposing the galling restraint of foreign influence. These two gifts were, indeed, powerful enough to give a cast to his poetry which has made much of it uninteresting or unintelligible to ordinary men. Few men are of a musing cast of mind, and therefore, however otherwise similar in structure their character may be to Wordsworth's own, they take no delight in watching the fresh bubbles of thought rise to the surface from the depths of that clear and crystal well, nor do they *recognise* them again as the imprisoned breath of joy which gives freshness and elasticity to their own lives, even if they be persuaded for a moment to stand and watch. But though the appearance of simplicity in Wordsworth may be obscured by the tendency to gaze back into the sources of life, instead of looking forward into action, yet this one imaginative peculiarity only brings out the essential simplicity of his character with greater distinctness,—rendering more marked that settled preference for the common, daily, quiet, natural interests on which all human minds can rest, over those special and accidental excitements which only an unusual combination of circumstances can produce, yet on which most poets rely for their inspiration.

There are two different ideas which we commonly mean to express when we speak of simplicity of character. A simple character properly means one of which the essence shines out most completely and brightly at every point, which most keeps and displays its fundamental identity in every action and thought, so that it does not need to be slowly interpreted and pieced together from a wide surface of experience, but is seen at once to be really the same in the most different attitudes. In this sense, for instance (in which simplicity means transparency), we say that Shelley had one of the simplest of characters, Byron one of

the most turbid and opaque. Yet in another sense Shelley's was one of the least simple; for we also mean by simplicity that which is most deeply rooted in common human nature, which is fullest of the natural *average* material of every-day men. But in both senses, that of transparence and that of common universality, we say that Goldsmith has all the national simplicity of the Irish character; in both senses we can also say that Wordsworth has all the national simplicity of the English character. Give a homely English peasant that brooding and meditative spirit, that deep musing joy in watching his own life and the life of nature around, and you might almost have another Wordsworth. The only reason why this is ever denied is, that he had meditative gifts which altogether altered the *form* of his thoughts, causing, as it were, an infinitude to stream in upon them, which very much disconcerts "plain men;" but not the less is it eminently true, that Wordsworth's mind was in substance that of a "plain" Englishman, though steeped in the dim lights of constant meditation, and gifted with a piercing, though narrow, imaginative force. In this kind of simplicity, or community of mind with every-day man, Wordsworth has a real affinity with three of the greatest poets of any age—Homer, Chaucer, and Shakespeare; for though he has no gleam of dramatic power, he has the same delight in common people, common things, common situations. But in the other kind of simplicity—transparency, he is, from his narrowness of practical sympathy and active power, necessarily far beyond them; for Wordsworth's is a mind almost of *one* attitude, that of contemplation; and, of course, to limited understandings at least, this conduces very much to transparency. It is no doubt true that, to an infinite intelligence, the *whole* of Shakespeare would be as distinctly pictured in any one of his myriad attitudes of spirit as the whole of Wordsworth in his single mood; indeed all men have a dim feeling that this must be so,—that every free and genial nature, if really single-minded in the moral sense, must be completely expressed in all the acts into which its spirit is poured,—nay, that of all beings, the highest is the *most* transparent, if we had but eyes to see; but as transparency depends on our seeing power, as well as on the fullness of expression in what we see, it is very clear that the least various-minded will soonest and most completely leave upon our vision that impression of singleness of nature which we call simplicity. In this respect Shelley and Wordsworth are curiously like each other, and curiously unlike. Shelley's poetic mind was of one attitude; but that attitude was active,—one of suffering emotion, unsatisfied aspiration, yearning love,—and hence springs the clear simplicity of passion in his style. This mood wholly occupied him; he could feel, think,



understand nothing else; and consequently, in the range of its life and interests, his poetry is the least generally popular of all English poetry that can claim to be on any level with it in fire and beauty. Wordsworth too is a poet of one attitude; but that attitude, being one of contemplation, did not shut out, but naturally included, at least as *objects* of poetic thought, all that came within the scope of his own simple experience; and therefore, though quite as narrow as Shelley in the *manner* of his poetry, there is in his poems a far wider and more substantial human ground.

Mr. Emerson has recorded a remark of Wordsworth's, made after criticising some writer's style: "To be sure it was the manner; but then, you know, the matter always comes out of the manner." The remark was evidently a hasty generalisation from his own experience, and in that light is very characteristic. To suppose that Wordsworth merely meant that the poet chooses only such themes as his own nature enables him to enter into and to illuminate, is to rob the remark of all weight and value. He no doubt meant a great deal more than this, and no doubt he was thinking mainly of his own works. He meant not merely that the choice of the (nominal) matter depends on the manner of the poet, but that, in his own case at least, the real matter always came more from the *manner* of the poet than from the object itself to which at the time his mind was turned. There are poets who steep and lose themselves in their theme, whose poetic power lies in their capacity for perfect absorption in their subject. Their manner does not create their matter; but, on the contrary, the matter has the power of bringing their manner into harmony with itself, as was the case with Shakespeare. There are other poets who have no manner, no mode of treatment apart from their matter; their own personal feelings are at once manner and matter; they describe their own emotions in various ways, and that is all they can do: of this school, in great measure at least, is Byron. Wordsworth belongs to neither of these schools; he almost always has a distinct object of thought, and a characteristic manner of treating that object. The manner is not lost in the apparent matter, nor the apparent matter in the manner: but the significance of the latter so much overbalances that of the former, that he is quite right in saying the characteristic element—the *poetry*—in short, the *true* matter of his poems—springs a great deal less from the apparent matter than it does from his mode of treatment. For example, it is to some extent, no doubt, the daffodils of Ulleswater, but far more the dancing flowers and waves that instantly took possession of the valley of his own mind, which remain pictured for ever in the most popular of his minor poems. The *real* centre of poetic interest always lies some-

where *between* the poet and his nominal theme; but in Wordsworth's case very much nearer to the poet than to the object he contemplates. To understand Wordsworth's matter, it is absolutely necessary to understand fully his manner first.

There is no poet who gives to his theme so perfectly *new* a birth as Wordsworth. Not, indeed, that he discerns and revivifies the *natural* life which is in it; but he creates a new thing altogether, namely the life of thought which it has the power to generate in his own brooding imagination. Thus he uses human sorrow, for example, as an influence to stir up his own meditative spirit, till it loses its own nature and becomes

"Sorrow that is not sorrow, but delight;  
And miserable love, that is not pain  
To hear of, for the glory that redounds  
Therefrom to human kind and what we are." \*

It is this strange *transmuting* power, which his meditative spirit exercises over all earthly and human themes, that gives to Wordsworth's poems the intense air of solitude which every where pervades them. He is the most solitary of poets. Of him, with far more point than of Milton, may it be said, in his own words, that "his soul was like a star, and dwelt apart." Of all English poems, his works are the most completely removed even from the range of Shakespeare's universal genius. In solitude only could they have originated, and in solitude only can they be perfectly enjoyed. Nor does this arise merely from the distinct intellectual new-birth which every scene, every thought, and every passion undergoes, when it comes within the spell of Wordsworth's musing mind. It is mainly that he makes you feel his isolation of spirit, by never *surrendering* himself to the natural and obvious currents of thought or feeling in the theme he takes; but changes their direction by cool side-winds from his own spiritual nature. Natural rays of feeling are refracted the moment they enter Wordsworth's imagination. It is not the theme acting on the man that you see, but the man acting on the theme. He himself consciously brings to it the spiritual forces which determine the lines of meditation; he evades, or even *resists*, the inherent tendencies of emotion belonging to his subject; catches it up into that dim spiritual imagination, and makes it yield a totally different fruit of contemplation to any which it seemed naturally likely to bear. It is in this that he differs so completely in manner from other self-conscious poets—Goethe, for instance, who in like manner always left the shadow of himself on the field of his vision. But with Goethe it is a shadow of self in quite a different sense. Goethe watches him-

\* Prelude, book xiii. p. 345.

self drifting along the tide of feeling, and keeps an eye open outside his heart. But though he overhears himself, he does not interfere with himself; he listens breathlessly, and notes it down. Wordsworth, on the other hand, refuses to listen to this natural self at all. He knows another world of pure and buoyant meditation; and he knows that all which is transplanted into it bears there a new and nobler fruit. With fixed visionary purpose, he snatches away his subject from the influence of the lower currents it is beginning to obey, and compels it to breathe its life into that silent sky of conscious freedom and immortal hope in which his own spirit lives. Wordsworth has himself explained this fixed purpose of his imagination to stay the drift of common thoughts and common trains of feeling, and lift them up into the light of a higher meditative mood, in a passage of a remarkable letter to *The Friend*. It illustrates so curiously the deeper methods of his genius, that we must quote it :

“A familiar incident may render plain the manner in which a process of intellectual improvement, the *reverse of that which nature pursues*, is by reason introduced. There never perhaps existed a school-boy who, having, when he retired to rest, carelessly blown out his candle, and having chanced to notice, as he lay upon his bed in the ensuing darkness, the sullen light which had survived the extinguished flame, did not, at some time or other, watch that light as if his mind were bound to it by a spell. It fades and revives—gathers to a point—seems as if it would go out in a moment—again recovers its strength, nay becomes brighter than before: it continues to shine with an endurance, which in its apparent weakness is a mystery—it protracts its existence so long, clinging to the power which supports it, that the observer, who had lain down in his bed so easy-minded, becomes sad and melancholy: his sympathies are touched—it is to him an intimation and an image of departing human life; the thought comes nearer to him—it is the life of a venerated parent, of a beloved brother or sister, or of an aged domestic; who are gone to the grave, or whose destiny it soon may be thus to linger, thus to hang upon the last point of mortal existence, thus finally to depart and be seen no more. This is nature teaching seriously and sweetly through the affections; melting the heart, and through that instinct of tenderness, developing the understanding. In this instance the object of solicitude is the bodily life of another. Let us accompany this same boy to that period between youth and manhood, when a solicitude may be awakened for the moral life of himself. Are there any powers by which, beginning with a sense of inward decay, that affects not, however, the natural life, he could call to mind the same image, and hang over it with an equal interest as a visible type of his own perishing spirit? O, surely, if the being of the individual be under his own care; if it be his first care; if duty begin from the point of accountableness to our conscience, and through that, to God and human nature; if without such primary sense

of duty, all secondary care of teacher, of friend or parent, must be baseless and fruitless; if, lastly, the motions of the soul transcend in worth those of the animal functions, nay give to them their sole value,—then truly are there such powers: and the image of the dying taper may be recalled and contemplated, though with no sadness in the nerves, no disposition to tears, no unconquerable sighs, *yet with a melancholy in the soul, a sinking inward into ourselves from thought to thought, a steady remonstrance, and a high resolve.* Let, then, the youth go back, as occasion will permit, to nature and to solitude, thus admonished by reason, and relying upon this newly-acquired support. A world of fresh sensations will gradually open upon him as his mind puts off its infirmities, and as, *instead of being propelled restlessly towards others in admiration, or too hasty love,* he makes it his prime business to understand himself. New sensations, I affirm, will be opened out—pure, and sanctioned by that reason which is their original author; and precious feelings of disinterested, that is, self-disregarding joy and love may be regenerated and restored: and, in this sense, he may be said to measure back the track of life he has trod.”

Now it is clearly this mood (a mood which gave birth to all his finest poetry) that throws so deep an air of solitude around Wordsworth's poems. We feel that the poet must live alone in order thus consciously to bathe all that he touches with a new atmosphere not its own. We are most alone when we most distinctly feel the boundary-line between ourselves and the world beyond us. In acts of free-will the sense of human solitude is always at its height; for in them we distinguish *ourselves* from all things else. And in the world of imagination this spiritual freedom is especially remarkable. *There* we have always heard that freedom is not, that genius is undisputed master of the will. Wordsworth's poetry is the living refutation of this assertion. He is so solitary, because we feel that his spirit consciously directs his imagination, and imposes on it from within influences *stronger* than any it receives from without.

“The outward shows of sky and earth,  
Of hill and valley, he has viewed;”

but

“impulses of deeper birth  
Have come to him in solitude.”\*

Reverie is not solitary, and Wordsworth is not the poet of reverie. In reverie the mind wholly loses the boundaries of its own life, and wanders away unconsciously to the world's end. Wordsworth's musings are never reveries. He never loses either himself or the *centre* of his thought. He carries his own spiritual world with him, draws the thing or thought or feeling on which

\* A Poet's Epitaph, vol. v. of Wordsworth's Poems, p. 24. (The seven-volume edition.)

he intends to write from its common orbit, fixes it, like a new star, in his own higher firmament, and there contemplates it beneath the gleaming lights and mysterious shadows of its new sphere. It is in this respect that he differs so widely in habit of thought from Coleridge, who was also a muser in his way. All his thoughts in any one poem flow as surely from a distinct centre as the fragrance from a flower. With Coleridge they flit away down every new avenue of vague suggestion, till we are lost in the inextricable labyrinth of tangled associations. The same spiritual freedom which set Wordsworth's imagination in motion, also controlled and fixed it on a single focus. And this he himself noted in contrasting his own early mental life with his friend's abstract and vagrant habits of fancy :

" I had forms distinct  
To steady me ; each airy thought revolved  
Round a substantial centre, which at once  
Incited it to motion and controlled.  
I did not pine like one in cities bred,  
As was thy melancholy lot, dear friend,  
Great spirit as thou art, in endless dreams  
Of sickness, disjoining, joining, things  
Without the light of knowledge." \*

That this spiritual freedom, acting through the imagination, and drawing the objects of the poet's contemplation voluntarily and purposely into his own world of thought, is the most distinguishing characteristic of Wordsworth's poetry, no one can doubt who compares him with any other of our great poets. All other poets create their poetry, and even their meditative poetry, in the act of throwing themselves *into* the life of the scene or train of thought or feeling they are contemplating ; Wordsworth deliberately withdraws his imagination from the heart of his picture to contemplate it in its spiritual relations. Thus, for instance, Tennyson and Wordsworth start from the same mood, the one in the song "Tears, idle tears," the other in the poem called the "Fountain." Tennyson's exquisite poem is well known :

"Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean ;  
Tears from the depth of some divine despair  
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,  
In looking on the happy Autumn-fields,  
And thinking of the days that are no more.  
  
Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,  
That brings our friends up from the underworld ;  
Sad as the last which reddens over one  
That sinks with all we love below the verge ;  
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.

\* Prelude, book viii. p. 224.

Ah, sad and strange, as in dark summer dawns  
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds  
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes  
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square ;  
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

Dear as remembered kisses after death,  
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned  
On lips that are for others ; deep as love,  
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret ;  
O Death in Life, the days that are no more."

Now turn to Wordsworth's treatment of the same theme :

" My eyes are dim with childish tears,  
My heart is idly stirred ;  
For the same sound is in my ears  
Which in those days I heard.

Thus fares it still in our decay ;  
And yet the wiser mind  
Mourns less for what age takes away  
Than what it leaves behind.

The blackbird amid leafy trees,  
The lark above the hill,  
Let loose their carols when they please,  
Are quiet when they will.

With Nature never do they wage  
A foolish strife ; they see  
A happy youth, and their old age  
Is beautiful and free.

But we are pressed by heavy laws ;  
And often, glad no more,  
We wear a face of joy because  
We have been glad of yore."

Tennyson continues in the same strain of emotion with which he begins, picturing the profound unspeakable sadness with which we survey the irrecoverable past ; Wordsworth no sooner touches the same theme than he checks the current of emotion, and, to use his own words, "instead of being restlessly propelled" by it, he makes it the object of contemplation, and, "with no unconquerable sighs, yet with a melancholy in the soul, sinks inward into himself, from thought to thought, to a steady remonstrance and a high resolve." And thus meditating, he wrings from the temporary sadness fresh conviction that the ebbing away, both in spirit and in appearance, of the brightest past, sad as it must ever be, is not so sad a thing as the weak yearning which, in departing, it often leaves stranded on the soul, to cling to the *appearance* when the spirit is irrecoverably lost. There is no other great poet who thus redeems new ground for spiritual meditation from beneath the very sweep of the tides of the most engrossing affections, and quietly maintains it in possession of

the musing intellect. There is no other but Wordsworth who has led us "to those sweet counsels *between head and heart*" which flash upon the absorbing emotions of the moment the steady light of a calm infinite world. None but Wordsworth have ever so completely "transmuted," by an imaginative spirit, unsatisfied yearnings into eternal truth. No other poet ever brought out as he has done

" The soothing thoughts that spring  
Out of human suffering ;"

or so tenderly preserved the

" wall-flower scents  
From out the crumbling ruins of fallen pride ;"

or taught us how,

" By pain of heart, now checked, and now impelled,  
The intellectual power through words and things  
Went sounding on a dim and perilous way."

He has himself described this self-determination of his genius to "preserve and enlarge the *freedom in himself*" in lines so beautiful, that, though we have already lingered long on this point, we cannot forbear quoting them :

" Within the soul a faculty abides  
That, with interpositions that would hide  
And darken, so can deal that they become  
Contingencies of pomp, and serve to exalt  
Her native brightness. As the ample moon,  
In the deep stillness of a summer even  
Rising behind a thick and lofty grove,  
Burns like an unconsuming fire of light  
In the green trees ; and, kindling on all sides  
Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil  
Into a substance glorious as her own,  
Yea with her own incorporated, by power  
Capacious and serene. Like power abides  
In man's celestial spirit ; virtue thus  
Sets forth and magnifies herself ; thus feeds  
A calm, a beautiful, and silent fire  
From the incumbrances of mortal life,  
From error, disappointment, nay, from guilt ;  
And sometimes, so relenting justice wills,  
From palpable oppressions of despair."\*

Of other poets, Tennyson alone may seem in some of his more thoughtful poems (the "In Memoriam" and "The Two Voices") to have approached Wordsworth's domain in employing the spiritual imagination to illuminate the moods of human emotion. In reality, however, even these poems are quite distinct in kind. They are more like glittering sparks flying upwards from the

\* Excursion, book iv. p. 152.

flames of self-consuming aspirations than the quiet, steadfast, and spiritual lights of Wordsworth's insight.

But it is by no means principally in treating these deeper themes that Wordsworth brings the most of this conscious, *voluntary*, imaginative force to bear upon his subjects. All his most characteristic poems bear vivid traces of the same mental process. In his poems on subjects of natural beauty it is perhaps even more remarkable than in his treatment of mental subjects where this contemplative withdrawal from the immediate *tyranny* of a present emotion, in order to gain a higher point of view, seems more natural. But in all his most characteristic poems on nature there is just the same method: first, a subjection of the mind to the scene or object or feeling studied; then a withdrawing into his deeper self to exhaust its *meaning*. Thus, in the fine poems on Yarrow, the point of departure is the craving of the mind to see an object long ago painted in the imagination; but instead of yielding to the current of that feeling, the poet checks himself, and meditates whether the imaginative anticipation may not in itself be a richer wealth than any reality which could take its place:

“ Let beeves and homebred kine partake  
 The sweets of Burn-mill meadow,  
 The swan on still St. Mary's Lake  
 Float double swan and shadow!  
 We will not see them, will not go  
 To-day, nor yet to-morrow:  
 Enough if in our hearts we know  
 There's such a place as Yarrow.

Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown!  
 It must, or we shall rue it;  
 We have a vision of our own,—  
 Ah, why should we undo it?  
 The treasured dreams of time long past,  
 We'll keep them, winsome Marrow;  
 For when we're there, although 'tis fair,  
 'Twill be another Yarrow.”

And in the same way, in the poem on “Yarrow visited,” after brooding over its beauties, he puts them at a distance from him, to distinguish the influence of the “waking dream,” “the image that hath perished,” in helping him to see the reality: “I see; but not by sight alone, loved Yarrow, have I won thee.” And then finally, in revisiting the same spot in old age, we have first the picture of the present; and, as the memory of the past, with its regrets, naturally follows, again the poet shakes himself free from this—the natural mood of the *natural* man, so to speak—in recognising the beauties of happier years, to win the higher spiritual insight that—



“ the visions of the past  
 Sustain the heart in feeling  
 Life as she is—our changeful life,  
 With friends and kindred dealing.”

And he ends this most perfect triad of spiritual imaginations with the characteristic verse,—

“ Flow on for ever, Yarrow stream,  
 Fulfil thy pensive duty,  
 Well pleased that future bards should chant  
 For simple hearts thy beauty ;  
 To dream-light dear while yet unseen,  
 Dear to the common sunshine,  
 And dearer still, as now I feel,  
 To memory's shadowy moonshine.”

As more striking illustrations of the same poetic method—more striking simply because the subjects are apparently so purely *descriptive* that there would seem to be less room for this “sinking inward into himself from thought to thought”—we may recall those daffodils transfigured before the “inward eye, which is the bliss of solitude;” the cuckoo, which, though “babbling only to the vale of sunshine and of flowers,” he spiritualises into a “wandering voice,” that “tellest unto me a tale of visionary hours;” the mountain echo, which sends her “unsolicited reply” to the same babbling wanderer; the nut-laden hazel-branches, whose luxuriant feast first threw him into “that sweet mood when pleasure loves to pay tribute to ease,” and then so “patiently gave up their quiet being,” that, haunted by remorse, he is compelled to exclaim, “with gentle hand touch, for there is a spirit in the woods;” the daisy, that recalls him from “stately passions” to “the homely sympathy that heeds the common life our nature breeds;” and the mists, which “magnify and spread the glories of the sun's bright head.” But there is no finer instance of Wordsworth's self-withdrawing mood in gazing at external things than that of the lines on the Boy of Windermere who mocked the owls. For real lovers of Wordsworth, these lines have effected more in helping them adequately to imagine the full depth of the human imagination, and to feel the inexhaustible wealth of Nature's symbols, than any magnificence of storm or shipwreck or Alpine solitude :

“ There was a boy : ye knew him well, ye cliffs  
 And islands of Winander ! many a time  
 At evening, when the earliest stars began  
 To move along the edges of the hills,  
 Rising or setting, would he stand alone  
 Beneath the trees or by the glimmering lake ;  
 And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands  
 Pressed closely palm to palm, and to his mouth

Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,  
 Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,  
 That they might answer him ; and they would shout  
 Across the watery vale and shout again,  
 Responsive to his call, with quivering peals,  
 And long halloos and screams, and echoes loud  
 Redoubled and redoubled ; concourse wild  
 Of mirth and jocund din : and when it chanced  
 That pauses of deep silence mocked his skill,  
 Then sometimes, in that silence while he hung  
 Listening, a *gentle shock of mild surprise*  
*Has carried far into his heart the voice*  
*Of mountain torrents ;* or the visible scene  
 Would enter unawares into his mind,  
 With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
 Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received  
 Into the bosom of the steady lake."

No other poet but Wordsworth that the world ever produced could have written this ; you feel in reading it that the lines "a gentle shock of mild surprise has carried *far into his heart* the voice of mountain torrents," had for him an exactness as well as a fullness of meaning :—for there is an infinite variety in the depth of his poetic imaginations ; some lie near the surface ; others lie deeper, but still within the sphere of less meditative minds ; others spring from a depth far beyond the reach of any human soundings.

Again, the beauty of Wordsworth's little ballads is never properly understood by those who do not enter into the contemplative tone in which they are written. There is none of them that can be approached in a mood of *sympathetic* emotion without failing to produce its full effect. "Lucy Gray," for example, is a continual disappointment to those who look for an expression of the piteousness and desolation of the lost child's fate.\* Wordsworth did not feel it thus ; he was contemplating a pure and lonely death as the natural completion of a pure and lonely life. He calls it not "Desolation," but "Solitude." He strikes the key-note of the poem in speaking of her in the first verse as "the solitary child," and then

"No mate, no comrade Lucy knew ;  
 She dwelt on a wide moor,  
*The sweetest thing that ever grew*  
*Beside a human door."*

Wordsworth's purpose evidently was to paint a perfectly lovely solitary flower snapped, for its very purity, in its earliest bud, that it might remain an image of solitary beauty for ever. He *intended* to dissolve away all pain and pity in the loveliness of

\* Such as Mr. Kingsley, for instance, has so finely given in his ballad on the girl lost on the sands of Dee.

the picture. It was not the lot of Lucy Gray, but the spiritualised meaning of that lot as it lived in his imagination, that he desired to paint. Again, in the exquisite ballad "We are seven," few discern how every touch throughout the whole is intended to heighten the contrast between the natural health and joy of life in the living child and the supernatural secret of death. It is not a mere tale of one little cottage girl, who could not conceive the full meaning of death: it is the poet's contemplative contrast between the rosy beauty and buoyant joyousness of children's life and the "incommunicable" sleep, which is the subject of the poem. The perfect art with which this is effected is seldom adequately observed. He introduces the living child with a glimpse of the inward brightness that childish health and beauty breathe around them:

"She had a rustic woodland air,  
And she was wildly clad;  
Her hair was fair, and very fair:  
Her beauty made me glad."

And when he has drawn the picture of her eating her supper by the little graves of her brother and sister, that she may "sit and sing to them," he heightens the contrast yet more,—

"The first that died was little Jane:  
In bed she moaning lay,  
Till God released her of her pain,  
And then she went away.  
So in the churchyard she was laid;  
And when the grass was dry,  
*Together round her grave we played,*  
My brother John and I.  
And when the ground was white with snow,  
*And I could run and slide,*  
My brother John was forced to go,  
And he lies by her side."

Simple as this language is, it is not the language in which a child would have spoken. It is the language of a poet musing on the contrast between the little silent graves, changing with every season, freshening with the spring, and wetted by the rain, and whitened by the winter's snow, like any other specks of common earth, and the buoyant child's unshaken fancy that they contain her sister and her brother still. So full she is of overflowing life herself, that though she can "run and slide," the whitened mounds can still seem to her to hide a life as vivid as her own.

The voluntary element that we have noticed in Wordsworth's genius—the power of checking obvious and natural currents of thought or feeling in order to brood over them meditatively

and bring out a result of a higher order, leads to many of his imperfections as well as beauties. He had an eminently frugal mind. He liked of all things to make the most of the smaller subject before he gave himself up to the greater. The sober, sparing, free-will with which he gathers up the crumbs, and feeds his genius on them before he will break in on any whole loaf, is eminently characteristic of him. Emotion does not hurry him into poetry, nor into any thing else. He "slackens his thoughts of choice,"\* when they grow eager; he defers his feast of nuts that he may first enjoy expectation to the full; he will wear out the luxury of his imaginations of Yarrow before he tries on the reality; he is more willing by far to wait for the due seasons of poetry than the husbandman for the due seasons of fruit:

" His mind was keen,  
Intense, and frugal; apt for all affairs,  
And watchful more than ordinary men."†

The poem on the strawberry-blossom is right from the heart of his own nature:

" That is work of waste and ruin :  
Do as Charles and I are doing.  
Strawberry-blossoms one and all,  
We must spare them—here are many.  
Look at it, the flower is small—  
Small and low, but fair as any ;  
Do not touch it—summers two  
I am older, Anne, than you.  
\* \* \* \* \*

Hither, soon as spring as fled,  
You and Charles and I will walk ;  
Lurking berries ripe and red  
Then will hang on every stalk,  
Each within its leafy bower ;  
And for that promise spare the flower."

And so Wordsworth himself would always have saved up his strawberry-blossoms of poetry till the "lurking berries ripe and red" lay in them, had he had the quick eye to distinguish between the unripe beauty and the ripe. But this he had not. As he himself tells us, he found it almost impossible to distinguish "a timorous capacity from prudence," "from circumspection, infinite delay." He had not that swiftness and fusion of nature which helps a man to distinguish at once the fruit of his lower and higher moods of mind. He gathered in

" the harvest of a quiet eye,  
That broods and sleeps on its own heart,"

with indiscriminating frugality, gathering in often both tares and wheat. The truth is, that the very *voluntary* character of his

\* Prelude, book i.

† Michael.

imaginative life, which enabled him to give so new an aspect to that on which he brooded, also rendered him unable to distinguish with any delicacy between the various moods in which he wrote. A poet who is the mere instrument, as it were, of his own impulses of genius, knows when the influence is upon him ; but a poet whose visionary mood is always half-voluntary, and a result of a gradual withdrawing of the mind into its deeper self, cannot well have the same quick vision for the boundary between commonplace and living imagination which belongs to natures of more spontaneous genius. Wordsworth seems to kindle his own poetic flame, like a blind man kindling his own fire ; and often, as it were, he goes through the process of striking a light without observing that the tinder is damp and has not caught the spark ; and thus, though he has left us many a beacon of pure and everlasting glory flaming from the hills, he has left us also many a monumental pile of fuel from which the poetic fire had early died away.

It is clear that Wordsworth as a poet did, as he tells us himself, "feel the weight of too much liberty." In his finest poem he declares—

"Me this unchartered freedom tires,  
I feel the weight of chance desires."

And no doubt he had even too complete a poetic mastery over himself, or rather perhaps he had too quiet a nature to master. He could not distinguish the *arbitrary* in his poetry from the conscious conquests of insight. And being, as we have seen, most frugal by nature—feeling, as he did, to the very last day of his poetic life, that it was the greatest of impieties to "tax high Heaven with prodigality,"\* he made the most of these "chance desires" or suggestions, and often *more* than the most, using them as the pedestals to thoughts in reality far too broad for them. It is the great defect of Wordsworth's poems, that where he has to deal with *circumstance* at all, he either gives it in all its baldness, or makes his meditations *overhang* it, like the projecting stories of old-fashioned houses, in which the basement is more costly than the air, and therefore is husbanded more carefully. To him the basement of circumstance was very costly, and the superinduced contemplation as abundant as the former was costly. Coleridge has criticised this tendency in Wordsworth to spread out a dome of thought over very insufficient supports of fact, in accusing him of "thoughts and images too great for their subject." It is mistaken criticism, we think, to assert this, as Coleridge does, of any of his poems on nature. The daisy and

\* See the beautiful verses, "The unremitting voice of nightly streams," to which the date 1846 is attached.

the daffodils breathed a buoyant joy and love into Wordsworth's simple nature, which Coleridge could but half understand. The thoughts were *not* too great for the real influences they are capable of exerting. But to his poems on *incident*, Coleridge's charge is often perfectly applicable. The following criticism, for instance, contains a fair illustration of this tendency to erect a meditative dome over an insecure pedestal. We quote from Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* :

"The poet having gone out for a day's tour of pleasure, meets early in the morning with a knot of gipsies, who had pitched their blanket-tents and straw-beds, together with their children and asses, in some field by the road-side. At the close of the day, on his return, our tourist found them in the same place. 'Twelve hours,' says he,

'Twelve hours, twelve bounteous hours are gone, while I  
Have been a traveller under open sky,  
Much witnessing of change and cheer;  
Yet as I left I find them here.'

Whereat the poet, without seeming to reflect that the poor tawny wanderers might probably have been tramping for weeks together through road and lane, over moor and mountain, and consequently must have been right glad to rest themselves, their children, and cattle for one whole day; and overlooking the obvious truth, that such repose might be quite as necessary for them as a walk of the same continuance was pleasing or healthful for the more fortunate poet,—expresses his indignation in a series of lines, the diction and imagery of which would have been rather above than below the mark had they been applied to the immense empire of China, improressive for thirty centuries :

'The weary sun betook himself to rest:—  
Then issued Vesper from the fulgent west,  
Outshining, like a visible god,  
The glorious path in which he trod.  
And now, ascending after one dark hour,  
And one night's diminution of her power,  
Behold the mighty Moon! This way  
She looks, as if at them; but they  
Regard not her:—O, better wrong and strife,  
Better vain deeds or evil, than such life!  
The silent heavens have goings on;  
The stars have tasks;—but *these* have none.' "

There is no *structural* power in Wordsworth's mind. When he has to deal with things, influences, *living unities*, he is usually opulent and at ease; for the natural emanations which flowers and mountains and children and simple rustic natures breathe around them are homogeneous in themselves, and only ask a poet who will open his whole spirit to them with steady contemplative eye, and draw in their atmosphere. But when much incident enters into poetry, the poet also needs high combining power; he needs the art of rapidly changing his mental attitude, and yet keeping the same tone and mood throughout; and to

this the voluntary, gradual, contemplative character of Wordsworth's intellectual nature is quite unequal. Wherever there is extended surface in his subject, there there is want of unity in the poem—inadequacy to blend a variety of elements into a single picture. There is no whole landscape in all Wordsworth's exquisite studies of nature. There is no variety of moral influences in all his many beautiful contemplations of character. There is no distinct centre of interest in any but his very simplest narratives. Indeed, he can deal with facts successfully only when they are simple enough to embody but a single idea: as in the case of Peter Bell and the Idiot Boy. If they have any character of *accident* about them, this reappears in his poems in all the accidental, discontinuous, and straggling form of its original existence. Almost any one of Wordsworth's fact-poems will immediately occur to the mind in illustration of this—"Simon Lee," "Alice Fell," the story of the traveller lost on Helvellyn, and many others. They are *anecdotes*, with passages often of surpassing beauty, but still untransmuted anecdotes,—here a bit of fact—there a gleam of natural loveliness—then a layer more of fact, and so forth. He neither throws himself into the narrative, so as to give you the active spirit of life inside it, as Scott did; nor does he give solely the contemplative view of it, as in his simplest ballads he can do with so much beauty; but he sprinkles a little macadam of stony fact along the fair upland path of his imagination. Thus, in the early editions of "The Thorn," he anxiously recorded the size of the infant's grave:

"I've measured it from side to side,  
'Tis three feet long and two feet wide"

—inevitably suggesting that the poet was an undertaker speculating on the size of the hidden coffin.

Yet these spots of prosiness are eminently characteristic of Wordsworth. He had vividly acute senses, and delighted in the mere physical use of them; they both relieved him from the strain of contemplation, and suggested new food for contemplation. "I speak," he says in the Prelude,

"in recollection of a time  
When the bodily eye—in every stage of life  
The most despotic of our senses—gained  
Such strength in *me*, as often held my mind  
In absolute dominion. . . . .  
I roam'd from hill to hill, from rock to rock,  
Still craving combination of new forms;  
New pleasure; wider empire for the sight,  
Proud of her own endowments; and rejoiced  
To lay the *inner faculties asleep*."

The truth of this statement is obvious to any one who reads

his earliest poems ; and these vivid senses continued to the last to work quite in separation from the poetic spirit within him ; so that no poet gives us so strong a feeling of the contrast between the inward and the outward as Wordsworth ; he *dives* into himself between his respirations, that he may exclude for a little while the tyranny of the senses, and so not waste his life in the mere animal pleasure of breathing. A geometrician would say, that while all other poetry moves on the plain of life, Wordsworth's is poetry of double curvature, and winds in and out continually beneath and above it. Mr. Hood, in one of the most thoughtful parts of his book, states, that the sense of hearing is the finest sense Wordsworth has, and gave rise to the finest poetry of nature he ever wrote. The latter statement is, we think, true ; but the inference from it, that the ear is the finest of Wordsworth's senses, is probably an error. There is no indication that he had any fine faculty for music ; and we think the reasoning by which Mr. Hood arrived at his inference is almost an inversion of the truth. It is because the ear cannot and did *not* fill and distract the contemplative mind so much as the eye,—because sound appeals directly to the interpreting spirit, and has so little substantive significance of its own,—that Wordsworth's poetry on sounds has, perhaps, less discontinuity, more fusion, than his poetry on sight. Vision absorbed him, and would not allow his "inward eye" to see until sight was exchanged for memory ; and even then his poems on visible things have two distinct portions—the descriptive portion, or the strophe dedicated to the eye, and the meditative antistrophe, which belongs to the mind. But when he listened, the sound only served to keep his mind fixed on a single centre, while it allowed him full scope for free meditation. It was not easy for him to macadamise his poetry with little abrupt matter-of-fact sounds. There is no poem like that "To the Cuckoo"—of all his poems Wordsworth's own darling. Whether "through water, earth, and air, the soul of happy sound was spread," or the "far-distant hills into the tumult sent an alien sound of melancholy not unnoticed," there was ever expression enough to stir the depths of Wordsworth's watchful heart without enslaving his senses.

But it is by no means due only to the imperfect unity between Wordsworth's spirit and senses, and his disposition to save up all he saw for his poetry just as he saw it, that these little constant specks of incongruous material so often annoy us ; the same thing occurs quite as often in his meditative poems. There was a rigidity in his mind, the offspring probably of the intense meditation he was wont to concentrate on single centres of thought. Hazlitt has thus finely described the general expression of his personal appearance :



"The next day Wordsworth arrived from Bristol at Coleridge's cottage. I think I see him now. He answered in some degree to his friend's description of him, but was more gaunt and Don-Quixote like. He was quaintly dressed (according to the *costume* of that unconstrained period) in a brown fustian-jacket and striped pantaloons. There was something of a roll, a lounge, in his gait, not unlike his own Peter Bell. There was a severe, worn pressure of thought about his temples, a fire in his eye (as if he saw something in objects more than the outward appearance), an intense high narrow forehead, a Roman nose, cheeks furrowed by strong purpose and feeling, and a convulsive inclination to laughter about the mouth, a good deal at variance with the solemn, stately expression of the rest of his face. Chantrey's bust wants the marking traits; but he was teased into making it regular and heavy. Haydon's head of him, introduced into the *Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem*, is the most like his drooping weight of thought and expression. He sat down, and talked very naturally and freely, with a mixture of clear gushing accents in his voice, a deep guttural intonation, and a strong tincture of the northern *burr*, like the crust on wine."

We seem to feel here that in Wordsworth, as well as in Peter Bell, there were many of

"The unshaped half-human thoughts  
Which solitary nature feeds  
'Mid summer storms or winter's ice."

We half apply to him that fine verse—

"There was a hardness in his cheek,  
There was a hardness in his eye,  
As though the man had fixed his face  
In many a solitary place  
Against the wind and open sky."

Indeed, he expressly tells us that this tendency to severity <sup>was</sup> the leaning of his mind; but that he had been led to more <sup>deli-</sup>cate and sensitive thoughts by his sister's influence—

"She gave me eyes, she gave me ears,  
And humble cares, and delicate fears;  
A heart the fountain of sweet tears,  
And love, and thought, and joy."

Naturally the rigidity of his mind was clearly great, and hence probably, his great deficiency in humour, which cannot exist without a certain flexibility of both feeling and thought, allowing of rapid transitions from one point of view to another. It was not only that he had "fixed his face in many a solitary place against the wind and open sky," but in the intellectual spaces it was the same. Against the infinite solitudes of the eternal world he had intently fixed his spirit, till it too had something of the rigid attitude of the mystic, and was crossed at times by the dark

spots which constant gazing at a great brightness will always produce. He paid for the frequency of

“that blessed mood  
 In which the burden of the mystery,  
 In which the heavy and the weary weight  
 Of all this unintelligible world  
 Is lightened—that serene and blessed mood,  
 In which the affections gently lead us on,  
 Until the breath of this corporeal frame,  
 And even the motion of our human blood,  
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
 In body, and become a living soul;  
 While with an eye made quiet by the power  
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
 We see into the life of things”—

—he paid, we say, for the frequency of this mood by a want of ease and delicacy in the lesser movements of his intellectual nature, which rendered him often unable to bring the minutiae even of his finest poems into harmony with their spirit. Thus he often mistook the commonplace observations of his superficial understanding for the deeper thoughts of his heart; he had no living feeling that told him when he was dividing things with the blunt edge of common sense, and when he was wielding that fine sword of the imagination by which the poet divides asunder soul and spirit to the eye of contemplation as surely as that greater sword divides for judgment. He would rise and fall in the same poem from clear vision to the obscure gropings of common sense—from obscure groping to clear vision—and not feel the incongruity. No one can help shrinking at the sudden discord, when, in the lovely poem, “She was a phantom of delight,” we read—

“And now I see with eye serene  
 The very pulse of the *machine*,  
 A being breathing thoughtful breath,  
 A traveller between life and death.”

It is a jar to the mind, like coming down three steps without notice to stumble over this “machine” in the midst of such a poem; you think of an automaton at once, or Madame Tussaud’s breathing figure. There are numbers of little poems completely written in this machine-mood; but the trial is severe when such a crag starts up to bruise you in the midst of perfect loveliness. We should not grumble if that “worthy short-lived youth” commemorated in another sonnet had been thus spoken of as a superseded mechanism; but that “a dancing shape, an image gay,” should be associated with any notion of the kind, suggests a meaning for the exquisite line “to haunt, to startle, and waylay,” the farthest possible, we should imagine, from the mind of the poet in writing it.

Many of these small discords which interrupt the harmony

of Wordsworth's poetry are due to the harmless egotism by which a man of moods so solitary and of genius so decisive was almost necessarily haunted. The smallest memoranda of his own mind or life he will often preserve in his poetry, with a kind of blind faith that they have a universal meaning. Thus, in one of his sonnets, he tells us elaborately how he gazed one day at the sea, and saw many ships; and his mind gradually began to take a particular interest in one of them, and how this one sailed northwards. One of his most thoughtful admirers suggested that this sonnet was perhaps trivial; but Wordsworth confuted her in a long letter, in which he proved that the sonnet was a poetic illustration of a universal law of mind, by virtue of which man must either find or make a unity in all that he contemplates; and if there be no determining reason, then the "liberty of indifference," as the metaphysicians call it, will come into play, and he will select a unit of thought arbitrarily, as the poet here chose for special interest a special ship, of which he truly observes, that it "was naught to me, nor I to her." "I must say," says Wordsworth of this gently remonstrant admirer, "that even she has something yet to receive from me. I say this with confidence, from her thinking that I have fallen below myself in the sonnet beginning, 'With ships the sea was sprinkled far and nigh.'" It might be replied, perhaps, that the same reasoning would prove him to be justified in using poetry to illustrate the simple conversion of propositions, or that a touching sonnet might be made on the "Illicit process of the Major." The best and even the most poetical defence we can make for such caprices is, that they are venial egotisms; for it is certainly more poetic to exhibit life—even egotistic life—in any fashion than to illustrate merely *formal* laws. And we should not have alluded to this at all, but that Hazlitt has set up a theory, founded in some measure, perhaps, on these little personal egotisms, to prove that Wordsworth's poetic power is born of egotism, and is part and parcel of his complete *want* of universality.

"Mr. Wordsworth is the last man to 'look abroad into universality,' if that alone constituted genius: he looks at home into himself, and is 'content with riches fineless.' He would in the other case be 'poor as winter,' if he had nothing but general capacity to trust to. He is the greatest, that is, the most original poet of the present day, only because he is the greatest egotist. He is 'self-involved, not dark.' He sits in the centre of his own being, and there 'enjoys bright day.' He does not waste a thought on others. Whatever does not relate exclusively and wholly to himself, is foreign to his views. He contemplates a whole-length figure of himself, he looks along the unbroken line of his personal identity. He thrusts aside all other objects, all other interests, with scorn and impatience, that he may repose

on his own being; that he may dig out the treasures of thought contained in it; that he may unfold the precious stores of a mind for ever brooding over itself. His genius is the effect of his individual character. He stamps that character—that deep individual interest—on whatever he meets. The object is nothing but as it furnishes food for internal meditation, for old associations. If there had been no other being in the universe, Mr. Wordsworth's poetry would have been just what it is. . . . With a mind averse from outward objects, but ever intent upon its own workings, he hangs a weight of thought and feeling upon every trifling circumstance connected with his past history. The note of the cuckoo sounds in his ear like the voice of other years; the daisy spreads its leaves in the rays of boyish delight that stream from his thoughtful eyes; the rainbow lifts its proud arch in heaven but to mark his progress from infancy to manhood; an old thorn is buried, bowed down under the mass of associations he has wound about it; and to him, as he himself beautifully says,

‘The meanest flow’r that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.’”

Hazlitt's malicious genius delighted in this kind of thorny praise. His criticisms are always full of personal genius; and come short of the truth mainly from the deep scepticism which always leaves him perfectly contented with his own paradox. He has no conviction that apparent paradox is not real. He is quite willing to believe that mere egotism can be the root of genius or of any thing else that is noble, and is not driven back to his facts by any aversion to so startling a conclusion. He tells us further on, that Wordsworth's "strength, as it often happens, arises from excess of weakness." This is but the sceptic's bitter version of the truth, that 'weakness constantly arises from excess of strength;' a form of the proposition not only more true in itself, but far more applicable to Wordsworth's poetry. Rare gifts of mind almost always tend to some overbalance of habit, or thought, or feeling—to some narrowness, pride, or humour, that is in itself a weakness. But no weakness ever *of itself tends* to an opposite strength, even though, as Wordsworth so finely observes in a passage we have already quoted, the free and voluntary wisdom of man may *transmute* it into an occasion for developing the highest strength; but this is through the supernatural life, not through any natural gravitation of weakness towards its opposite. Strong affections may tend to feebleness of purpose, but not feebleness of purpose to strong affections. Great contemplative power will tend to self-occupation, but self-occupation does not tend to contemplative power. Hazlitt saw that the egotism and the genius in Wordsworth were closely related, and with half-malicious pleasure hastily assumed that the worse quality had the deeper root. When he says that Wordsworth's poetry is mainly derived from "looking at home into himself,"

he says what we have all along endeavoured to establish; but when he *means* by this the contradictory of "looking abroad into universality," we totally differ from him. There are two selves in every man—the private and the universal;—the source of personal crotchets, and the humanity that is our bond with our fellow-men, and gives us our large influence upon them. Half Wordsworth's weakness springs from the egotistic self, as he himself implies when he says,

"Or is it that when human souls a journey long have had,  
And are returned into themselves, they cannot but be sad?"\*

But all his power springs from the universal self. Nor is it in the least true that Wordsworth's finest poems, as Hazlitt implies, are cocoons of arbitrary personal associations, spun around local and accidental centres. The worst element in Wordsworth is the arbitrary and occasional element. Freedom, indeed, enters into his very finest poems,—but thoughtful, not arbitrary freedom: he draws us out of the natural currents of thought and emotion; but if it be from "chance desires," if it be to have us "all to himself," and give us an egotistic lecture in his own little study,—he is as far as possible from his true poetic mood.

It is to put us into communication with a part of his nature, which has a feebler counterpart in ourselves; to give us the joy of feeling latent intellectual powers quickened into conscious life,—that, in all his finer poems, he gently intrudes upon us his own higher imaginative nature. It is an egotism, no doubt, when he ends a fine poem with the verse—

"Matthew is in his grave; yet now  
Methinks I see him stand,  
As at that moment, with a bough  
Of wilding in his hand."

But it is not an egotism to tell us, as he does in the *Prelude* (a poem that grows upon us, by the way, even more than the *Excursion*),—

"O, when I have hung  
Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass  
And half-inch fissures in the slippery rock,  
But ill-sustained, and almost (so it seemed)†  
Suspended by the blast that blew amain,  
Shouldering the naked crag,—O, at that time,  
While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,  
With what strange utterance did the loud dry wind  
Blow through my ear! the sky seemed not a sky  
Of earth, and with what motion moved the clouds!"

The difference lies in this, that in the former case the statement is a bare individual experience, which adds nothing to the living

\* *Star-gazers*,—*Poetical Works*, vol. ii.

† Unless, indeed, this pedantic accuracy as to insignificant fact (not unusual in Wordsworth) be an egotism.

expression of the poem—the bough of “wilding” being entirely an “accidental grace”—while the whole verse breaks the unity of the subject by its abrupt transition to a different period and point of view; whereas the latter, though also a personal memory, paints to the very life that fresh wonder which the excitement of a little physical danger will spread for any watching eye over the whole face of heaven and earth. There is no egotism or caprice in delineating personal experience that helps to widen or renew the essential life of others. Wordsworth was much excited on one occasion, at being told he had written a poem on “a daisy.” “No,” he said, “it was on *the* daisy—a very different thing.” There *was* a difference, and it was a difference characteristic of his best poetry. His finest mood never descends to local or personal accidents alien to the experience or imagination of his readers. Coleridge truly says in the recently-published lectures, that Shakespeare never copied a character from a mere individual—never painted a *unique* character at all; each of his characters might represent a whole class; and so too, in his very different world, all Wordsworth’s higher poems have a certain breadth of life and influence, without any of the abstractness which, in inferior poets, accompanies breadth.

In what, then, shall we say, in answer to Hazlitt’s criticism, that Wordsworth’s universality consists, if high universal intellect is to be found in his poems? Not in any power of elaborating what is usually understood by universal *Truth*: indeed, for so contemplative a poet, there is singularly little of the comprehensive grasp of Reason in his mind. Still less in any remarkable power of expressing universal emotions, though Hazlitt does regard him as essentially lyrical. His especial poetic faculty lies, we believe, in contemplatively seizing the characteristic individual *influences* which all living things, from the very smallest of earth or sea up to man and the Spirit of God, radiate around them to every mind that will surrender itself to their expressive power. It is not true that Wordsworth’s genius lay mainly in the region of *mere* nature;—rather say it lay in detecting nature’s influences just at the point where they were stealing unobserved into the very essence of our human soul. Nor is this all. His characteristic power lay no less in discovering divine influences, as they fall like dew upon the spirit. We may say that Wordsworth’s poetry is fed on sympathy *less*, and on influences from *natures differing in kind* from his own *more*, than any other poetry in the world; and that he delineates these influences just as they are entering into the very substance of humanity. Strike out the human element from his natural poems, and they lose all their meaning: he did not *paint* nature, like Tennyson; he arrested and interpreted its *spiritual expres-*

sions. He regarded *other* men chiefly as natural influences acting on himself; but he never was inclined to identify Nature with either Man or God; for freedom, immortality, and a spiritual God were of the very essence of his own meditative world. He is not specifically the poet of Nature, nor the poet of Man, nor the poet of Truth, nor the poet of Religion; he is the poet of all separate *living emanations* from Nature, or from Man or God. Contemplative as he is, his mind was too concentrated and intense for general *Truth*. He fixed his imagination and his life too entirely and intensely on single centres of influence. He could not pass from the one to the other, and grasp many at once, so as to discern their mutual *relations*, in the discrimination of which Truth consists. He kept to single influences: solitary contemplative communion with all forms of life which did not disturb the contemplative freedom of his spirit, was his strength. His genius was universal, but was not comprehensive; it did not hold many things, but it held much. You see this especially in his larger poems: he is like one of his own "bees that murmur by the hour in foxglove-bells." He cannot move gradually through a train of thought or a consecutive narrative. He flies from bell to bell, and sucks all the honey deliberately out of each. Hence he was so fond of the sonnet, because it was just suited to embody one thought; yet it seldom exhausted for him one subject, and there is often an injury to his genius in the transition from sonnet to sonnet when he wrote a series on one theme. His "plain imagination and severe," as he himself called it, isolated whatever it dealt with, brought it into immediate contact with his own spirit, and so drew from it slowly and patiently every drop of sweet or sad or stern influence that it had the power to give off. But it is with him consciously *influence*, and influence only. He never humanises the spirits of natural objects, as Shelley did. He puts no fairy into the flower,—no dryad into the tree,—no nymph into the river;—he is too much of a realist for that, and he has far too intense a consciousness of the simple magnificence of moral freedom. Indeed he has far too inelastic a *human* centre of contemplation for that to be possible. He regards Nature as a tributary to Man, sending him influences and emanations which pass into the very essence of his life, but never constitute that life. They are not like in *kind* to humanity. To liken them to higher beings is but to find "loose types of things through all degrees;" and when he addresses the river thus—

"O glide, fair stream, for ever glide,  
 Thy quiet soul on all bestowing,  
 Till all our minds for ever flow  
 As thy deep waters now are flowing,"

there is not even a momentary attempt to abstract from the

visible water, and bestow a *human* "soul" upon the river;—he only gathers up the spiritual influences which emanate from it into a living centre, just as he elsewhere spreads abroad the "soul of happy sound" through earth and air. He has the deepest conviction that different objects and scenes do radiate *specific* influences of their own, not dependent on the mere mood of the contemplative observer. So much is this the case, that to him even sleep is a calmer and more spiritual thing amongst the mountains than it can be among men,—

" Love had he found in huts where poor men lie ;  
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,  
The silence that is in the starry sky,  
The sleep that is among the lonely hills."

But these radiated influences are never human till they touch the human soul, and are transmuted by that touch. Rich and almost infinite streams of power and beauty Nature does pour into Man; but first when they reach that free and solitary spirit which draws down other and higher influences to meet them from God, do they fulfil their simple destiny. If any one chooses to deny that there is an absolute reality in the expressions of Nature to human minds,—that they are something as unalterable as the meaning of a smile or a frown,—he may and must say with Hazlitt that Wordsworth "never looks abroad into universality," but overwhelms natural objects with the weight of his own arbitrary associations. If the dancing daffodils are no real image of simple joy,—if the "power of hills" be a vague and misleading metaphor,—if the "welcome snow-drop"—

" That child of winter, prompting thoughts that climb  
From desolation towards the genial prime"—

can tell no true tale of immortality to the simple-hearted when sinking beneath the snows of age; if it be a "mere confusion of ideas" for a poet to believe

" That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved  
To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song;  
And from his alder shades and rocky falls,  
And from his fords and shallows, sent a voice  
That flowed along my dreams ;"

if there be nothing ghostly in the yew-tree, no "witchery" in the sky, and no eternal voices in the sea; if, in a word, "the invisible things of Him from the creation" are *not* "clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made,"—then indeed was Wordsworth "vain in his imagination," and "his foolish heart was darkened."

But Wordsworth did not doubt about these things; he *knew* them; and he knew well too the kind of human character they



served to make or mar. His own nature was of this primitive humanity :

“ Long have I loved what I behold—  
The night that calms, the day that cheers ;  
The common growth of mother earth  
Suffices me—her tears, her mirth,  
Her humblest mirth and tears.”

He knew how these simple influences could not be received into the heart without receiving also

“ a spirit strong,  
That gives to all the selfsame bent  
Where life is wise and innocent ;”

he knew that no heart which “ watches and receives ” what quiet nature gives, can have any of the preoccupying restlessness which evil brings ; he knew that he

“ Who affronts the eye of solitude, shall learn  
That her mild nature can be terrible.”

And thus we have a set of characters of simple grain, all of them fed by the life of nature, but all religious, spiritual, and free,—such as Michael, the Leech-gatherer, and the Wanderer in “ The Excursion ;” while we have Peter Bell, and, in part, the Solitary, on the other hand, whose personal strength had been spent in “ affronting the eye of solitude.”

The result of almost all Wordsworth’s universal experience of the influences of nature acting *alone* on man is gathered up into his three poems, “ Lucy,” “ Ruth,” and “ The Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle” (the last, perhaps, the most perfect effort of his genius) : the first being his conceptions of the plastic influences of Nature in moulding us into beauty ; the second, of her exciting influences in awakening the passions ; the last, of her tranquillising influences on a mind of thought. If we take with these the poem on the lonely Leech-gatherer, in which he *contrasts* the instinctive joy and life of nature with the burden of human free-will ; the great “ Ode on Immortality,” in which he brings natural life into contrast with the supernatural, speaking of “ those high instincts before which our mortal nature doth tremble like a guilty thing surprised ;” and finally, the lines in which he draws together Nature, free-will, and God into one of the sublimest poems of our language, the “ Ode to Duty,”—we have in essence nearly all the truth that Wordsworth anxiously gleaned from a life of severe meditation, though a very slight epitome indeed of the innumerable living influences from which that truth was learned. If any one doubts the real affinity between the expressions written on the face of Nature and those human expressions which so early interpret themselves to even infants that to account for them except as a *natural* language

seems impossible, the exquisite poem on "Lucy" ought to convert him. The contrast it illustrates between Wordsworth's faith in real emanations from all living or unliving "mute insensate" things, and the humanised "spirits" of life in the Greek mythological poetry, is very striking. Influences come from all these living objects, but *personified* influences never.

"Three years she grew in sun and shower ;  
Then Nature said, 'A lovelier flower  
On earth was never sown.  
This child I to myself will take,  
She shall be mine, and I will make  
A lady of my own.

Myself will to my darling be  
Both law and impulse ; and with me  
The girl, in rock and plain,  
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,  
Shall feel an overseeing power  
To kindle or restrain.

She shall be sportive as the fawn  
That wild with glee across the lawn  
Or up the mountain springs ;  
And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
And hers the silence and the calm  
Of mute insensate things.

The floating clouds their state shall lend  
To her ; for her the willows bend :  
Nor shall she fail to see  
Even in the motion of the storm  
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form  
By silent sympathy.

The stars of midnight shall be dear  
To her ; and she shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place  
Where rivulets dance their wayward round ;  
And beauty born of murmuring sound  
Shall pass into her face.

And vital feelings of delight  
Shall rear her form to stately height—  
Her virgin bosom swell :  
These thoughts to Lucy I will give,  
When she and I together live  
Here in this happy dell.'

Thus Nature spake—the work was done.  
How soon my Lucy's race was run !  
She died ; and left to me  
This heath, this calm and quiet scene,  
This memory of what hath been  
And never more will be."

But we must not linger longer on an endless theme. Of the poetry of Wordsworth that may, perhaps, never be said which

Wordsworth truly said of Burns, that "deep in the general heart of man his power survives;" for *his* is the poetry of solitude, and the "general heart of man" cannot bear to be alone. But there are some solitudes that cannot be evaded.

" Amid the groves, under the shadowy hills  
The generations are prepared ; the pangs,  
The internal pangs, are ready—the dread strife  
Of poor humanity's afflicted will,"—

—and then we leave the greatest poets of the great world, and look to one who was ever glad to gaze into the deepest depths of his own heart, of Nature, and of God. "The pangs, the internal pangs," were not ready for *him*. "Bright, solemn, and serene," perhaps he alone, of all the great men of that day, had seen the light of the countenance of God shining clear into the face of Duty :

" Stern Lawgiver ! Yet thou dost wear  
The Godhead's most benignant grace ;  
Nor know we any thing so fair  
As is the smile upon thy face.  
Flowers laugh before thee in their beds :  
And fragrance in thy footing treads.  
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;  
And the most ancient Heavens through thee are fresh and strong."

And therefore in his poems there will ever be a spring of something even fresher than poetic life—a pure, deep well of solitary joy.

#### ART. II.—THE RELATIONS OF ART TO RELIGION.

*The Poetry of Christian Art.* By A. F. Rio (English Translation). London: 1854.

*Æsthetic Papers.* Edited by Elizabeth P. Peabody. Boston: 1849.

*History of Latin Christianity.* By Henry Hart Milman, D.D. (Volume VI. Chapters viii. ix. x.) London: 1855.

*Pictures of Europe, framed in Ideas.* By C. A. Bartol. Boston: 1855.

*The Seven Lamps of Architecture.* By John Ruskin. Second edition. London: 1855.

RELIGION never has existed in a state of entire independence upon Art. Art has been the universal language of the spirit of man seeking after God. It has its origin in the necessity of

giving expression to sentiments and desires which are not capable of intellectual utterance, and which find in nature no sensible embodiment. In so far as Art is neither imitation nor handicraft (and in neither sense is it Art at all), it comes to us from the region of the invisible, and is an independent witness, more direct than nature, more positive than the Bible, to man's thirst for, and adaptation to, a spiritual realm of life. It is the supersensual in us making itself visible and audible through sculpture, painting, architecture, music—yearning and striving after manifestation by necessity of its nature, the deepest things that are in us craving most for some shape, symbol, or utterance. God awakens in the spirit of man, immediately from Himself, mediately through Nature, thoughts and visions that transcend reality; and of these, from age to age, Art becomes the language and the record; the language, so long as it satisfies the longing of the inward eye—the record, when the living inspiration demands higher symbols, and the older forms, like seeds, have given birth to the more glorious life in which they lose their own. At each stage of human growth Art reflects the highest spiritual life of the time, so long as that life stops short of the infinite and spiritual God. The Egyptian, who has not yet found himself, nor God in himself, shadows his deity in rock-temples and pyramids and vast mounds of brick and masonry—awful images of a material uniformity, of boundless tracts of time in which no change occurs. The Greek, whose mightiest thought and inspiration is not Nature but Man, in the ideal beauty of deified humanity finds the appropriate types of the Religion which mere humanity suggests. The Christian, whose inspiration is neither nature nor man, but nature and man in God, as from Him and carrying up to Him again, has inward wants that require an Art which will meet the needs of spiritual desire, which will both quicken and slake the thirst for a full moral harmony, for the beauty of goodness, for the divine countenance of love, for the human expression of immortal peace. And Christian Art, in each of its periods, down from the Catacombs to Raphael, and to a fuller art than Raphael's, if any such there be, has given form just to that aspect of Religion, to that portion of the perfect goodness and beauty, which was in possession of the heart of the age.

This last position might be illustrated at any length, if our subject was the history of religious Art, and not rather the legitimate relations of Art to Religion—the services which, by her nature, she is capable of rendering back to her divine inspirer. As Literature even when entering on a new birth has to work with the instruments that she finds in existence, and inherits a current coinage of phrases and imagery, which she must make

sufficient for her purpose, or displace, without violence, by nobler yet kindred forms; so Religion, the intensesness of her sympathy inclining her to ally herself with the life that is around her, is compelled to put her highest thoughts, dreams, and prophecies into the language of the day, and to unfold her new spirit through the gradual elevation of types and figures that are already understood. Christianity entered into the symbolism of Heathenism just as it entered into the Greek and Latin languages, and changed the significance of the old types as it exalted the meanings of the old words. As the old words, *man, God, faith, charity*, were made to carry ideas and to breathe sentiments that had no existence before, so the old symbols were made to proclaim the new religion; and by a more magic transformation than that of the palimpsests, without clumsy obliteration or outward change, the original significance faded away, and another soul occupied the unaltered forms. The Good Shepherd conveyed now the assurance of a Fold of which its heathen prototype knew nothing. The representation of immortal youth, the earliest image of the Saviour, though in all outward lineaments the same, now spoke a faith unbreathed by Orpheus or Apollo. The Cross, borne lightly in the hand of Christ, is now a sceptre of power, an emblem of the kingly might of meekness. The Ship toiling in the storm, though the old heathen emblem, now sails for another port. The Palm speaks now of another victory, the Anchor of another hope, the Garland of another glory. And it is remarkable that the early Christians, by the natural demands for an Art-language, were not only compelled in this way to transmute the heathen types, but also to turn the earlier religious history of the Hebrew, which was now transfigured, into typical representations of the fresh world of faith and hope into which they were new born. Abraham's sacrifice now typifies the offering of the well-beloved Son; Jonah, the resurrection; and Elijah, the ascension. Moses and the manna, and Moses striking the rock, no longer signify the bread which their fathers ate and were dead, nor the water of which whosoever drinketh shall thirst again; but the living bread that came down from heaven, and the river of pure water, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. The Ark is now the church of God; the Wilderness and the Red Sea, its escape from oppression, and its march to the spiritual Canaan; the three Children in the fiery furnace and Daniel in the lions' den, the sufferings and the deliverance of the Saints. But though thus with nothing ready to its forming hand but foreign symbols which conveyed repugnant meanings, and old symbols, if not with repugnant at least with far different meanings, how fully did the new Religion breathe a new spirit through subterranean

Rome, through the Church of the Catacombs, where Christian Art first spoke the eternal things of God. Sheltering there underground to escape the persecutor's eye, no touch of the painter's hand, no stroke of the sculptor's chisel, reminds of persecution; the life there expressed in Art is the new life with which the soul was filled—in unison with the world of eternal love just opened upon faith, and without an allusion of any kind, far less an angry or discordant one, to the other world from whose hatred it had fled for refuge into dens and caves of the earth. No bitterness, no revenge, no gloom, no sorrow, no thought or trace of suffering is expressed in the Art of the three first centuries, in the age when the Christian church had no safe life in the light of day. The worshippers amid the sepulchres, the first-born of a young faith, were too much occupied with eternal life to think of death but as the passage to God and their brethren; too much occupied with immortal joy to linger round the sufferings of a moment, and with universal love to engrave the record of discordant states. All the traces they have left of their own existence within the realm of Art bespeak beings flushed with the colours of the heaven to which they looked. It is not to be supposed for a moment that the Roman Christians of the three first centuries were free from evil passions, that there was no leaven of scorn or bitterness in their religious emotions; but Art, as we shall have occasion afterwards in the course of the argument more fully to set forth, takes its inspiration only from noble impulse, does not lend itself freely to evil passion, and cannot express it at all when any thing holy is present to the soul, unless it be to raise the sense of that holiness; as the face with which Judas gave the kiss, could we see it beside any worthy representation of our Lord, might enhance our feeling of the majesty of Christ.\* When Constantine raised Christianity to the upper air, Religion, which previously, in harmony with its condition, had been satisfied with a rude but forcible symbolism, and sought no perfectness of representative expression, took possession of the stately Basilica as the appropriate home of its rites, moulded it gradually to express all their meanings, placed its chief minister on the throne of the heathen judge; and above his head, within the vault of the sanctuary, painted with colours of living stone, and of a colossal magnitude, the awful features of the Spiritual King, the Judge of heaven and earth. Religion took the seat of Law, and with easy power adopted and glorified its symbols. The subterranean vault where the criminal had awaited his trial, was now the crypt where the martyr, the emancipated prisoner of the Lord, reposed in peace; and on the

\* This subject, magnificently treated by Jachometti, has been lately placed at the foot of the Scala Santa at Rome.

altar on which the magistrate had made his vow was now represented, in mystic symbolism, the crowning act of the self-sacrificing life of the Saviour of mankind. Gradually, as Religion made new demands on Art, and felt the world her own, mere symbolism ceased to be prominent; and the leading events of Christianity, as expressive of her great ideas and sentiments, were depicted in direct representation, and led the worshipper like a pilgrim through the long array of earthly trial, from the baptismal font beside the entrance-gate, step by step, along pictures of the universal life of the Son of Man which filled the aisles of the Basilica, up to the triumphal arch crowned with the cross, the *via crucis* which seemed to admit to the heavenly court and the very presence of the Son of God. Byzantine art supplied the types for these representations; but though Religion was strong, Art was yet weak, so the forms became fixed and traditional, and in the end only a higher kind of symbolism. Art, like Literature, requires the stir of human interests to quicken it. It may have dreams of divine beauty in the cloister, but it cannot give them shape. With the reviving animation of Europe, with the energy of the Crusades, a breath of fresh life passed over all the arts, and Architecture took at once a form of unborrowed glory. Painting and sculpture broke their bonds more slowly. From the twelfth century there are signs that the religious recluse, brooding over his immemorial types, was painfully struggling to express the new lineaments of spiritual beauty that were dawning on his soul; but power was wanting, and Religion had to wait for Giotto, a man filled with the new human life of the world, to bring to the birth the images which had been long growing in the heart of contemplation. And when Giotto's followers abused his vigour, and degraded religious types by the too bold imitation of natural life, the Cloister took them again to its bosom, and reissued them in more than their original elevation and ideal purity. But still the monk, though he could show his soul in his work, could not make the work itself perfect; the cold recluse, though glowing with visions of spiritual beauty, could not reach the rounded forms of life; and Fra Angelico—not without reason styled the Blessed even without canonisation, from the divine conceptions that filled his soul—had to wait for the untrammelled strength of the more human Raphael to show the perfection of their outward form. In innumerable ways, through this long course, Art reflected the changes that were taking place in the prevalent conceptions of Religion. The most significant of these was the change that took place in the representations of Christ. As in the imagination of the popular theology he receded into the Godhead, his humanity was conceived of only as the form in which he suffered, the body which he had

conquered and cast away; and all the beauty which the heart craves for, and must have, when it places our nature before God, began to centre upon the Virgin Mother. Other influences strengthened this tendency. Christianity seems to have been more joyous as it stood nearer to the freedom and unconsciousness of heathen life. The heart of the world gradually saddened. Perhaps it was disappointed of its early hopes of the speedy realisation of the kingdom. Perhaps it learned to try itself by a severer ideal, by an inward standard; and as it stood more and more within the presence of ineffable perfection, the sense of struggle and difficulty became dominant, human virtue paled at the contrast, man began to abhor himself, until his only meritorious attitude seemed to be humiliation, his only fitting worship a groan. This change is most strongly marked by the first introduction of the crucifix, towards the close of the seventh century. From that time the humanity and the divinity of Christ too often lost all their attractive features of celestial grace and invitation. The Man became the agonised sufferer; the God the unrelenting and terrible Judge, after the type so unhappily preserved by Michael Angelo.

We purposely abstain from tracing the faintest or most rapid outline of the history of religious Art; we wish only to exhibit the irrepressible instinct of Religion to employ an Art-language, so long at least as her reign is single and undivided,—so long as she is seated simply in the hearts and affections of men,—so long as she has to do mainly with the sentiments and aspirations in which all unite, and does not centre her chief popular interest in the distinctions and speculations in regard to which all begin to separate. The evidences of this instinct are scattered over every ancient land; wherever he goes, they are the traveller's principal attraction; they make the Ruins and fill the Museums of every celebrated city. Take away from the world the remains of religious Art,—remains we must call them, for since the sixteenth century there has been no religious art in the world, yet remains that are never to be cold,—and how many portions of the earth, whose very names are endeared to us by the new life we there enjoyed,—a life in which the eye saw something of what the soul had visioned, and the air seemed to breathe of saintly beauty,—would become at once mere names, stripped of every interest except that which lies upon the historic page! There are three Romes, ancient, subterranean, and modern. What would modern Rome be without the Vatican; and what would the Vatican be without the remains of religious Art? Enter those galleries, approached as through a long street of the monuments of the Catacombs; walk those halls, which begin with Praxiteles and end with Raphael, and unpeople them of their gods, of the expressions of the deepest



religious life of successive ages,—and see what you will leave behind. What would ancient Rome be without the Forum? and in the Forum there is nothing standing but the shafts of Temples. How many millions of men have made acquaintance with the glorious bays that lie between Naples and Pæstum, only that their eyes might dwell for some half-hour upon those shrines which in silence and solitude raise their awful loveliness between the mountains and the sea! To how many is Dresden nothing but a name to recall the Madonna di San Sisto, so that every other vestige or memory of it might be wiped from the soul without a sigh! Who would visit the foul inns of Sienna, if Guido da Sienna and Duccio di Buoninsegna and Simone Memmi had not there wrought out in stone and colours the religious thoughts that dwelt in their hearts? Who hears of Pisa, and is not at once in that silent square, where stand together the Duomo, the Campo Santo, and the Baptistery—religious symbols of the solemn initiation, the faith-sustained pilgrimage, and the beatified end of life,—with the Campanile, which serves alike for all three, to tell of the baptism of the baby, and the prayer of the world-weary, and the rest of the released? And standing there, or calling to mind all that gives that city a living interest in our hearts, a power to confer any blessing upon us, the names that rise gratefully to our lips are not those of her statesmen, and rulers, and warriors, and admirals, but Buschetto, and Andrea Orcagna, and Niccola, and Giovanni Pisano. Along the most glorious road in Italy, though nowhere is nature more grand or more lovely, more soft or more solemn, though the whole land heaves and swells like the sea,—the interest of mountains and waterfalls, of Soracte and Terni, the beauty of olive-groves, and pines, and chestnut-woods, and even of the sky that gives its magic to them all, is far outrivalled by the interest of the religious life which Art preserves in Assisi and Perugia, in Arezzo and Cortona, and even in that small temple “of delicate proportions” which watches the flowings of the crystal Clitumnus, much as Byron has spoiled the effect of its existing beauty by ridiculous exaggeration. And when by that road the traveller enters Florence, exhausted by impressions, but with his brain hot with expectation and desire, his impatience and longing are not to search out the monuments of her civic glory, or the far-famed palaces that stand like fortresses in her streets, but to find the *sasso di Dante*, to sit down where the tradition says that the immortal poet loved to sit, and whence the eye can fall upon the Cathedral of Arnolfo, upon Brunelleschi’s Dome, and Giotto’s Tower, and Ghiberti’s Gates of Paradise,—Religion’s symbols all; if, indeed, he is not still more impatient to reach her Galleries, not to look upon the Venus, though that too Art, true to its highest instincts, has made most

pure and chaste, but upon her in whose face Christian Art has expressed at once the divinest solicitude and the most sacred loveliness of a woman's soul. Every where in the traveller's world the things of deepest interest are the records that Art has written out of the religious life of the ages that are gone.

And now arises this question: Is it possible that Religion, which has thus always and every where breathed itself into Art, should not itself have been served by that visible symbol and expression? Is it possible that Religion has been the very life of Art, and that Art in return has brought nothing but corruption and death to Religion? Is it possible that the spirit which gave the inspiration that made love to brood, and genius to look aloft, and the saintly heart to see the forms that are most akin to God, should itself be stiffened or petrified in those forms, when they passed from out the souls that conceived them to be the perpetual possession of all mankind? Can it be that those spiritual Ideals, which are possible only to the few, the very few who are at once of saintly soul and of creative power, should yet permanently lower the conceptions of the many? The services that Religion has rendered to Art are manifest,—she has been the very soul of her life; but the services or the disservices that Art has rendered to Religion present a different and a far more difficult question. Will it be said that spiritual Religion must of necessity have no association with Art, for that God is pure spirit, invisible, infinite; and the Invisible can have no visibility, the Infinite no form? The objection introduces us at once to the peculiar province of Art, and the limits of its power. Art deals with form, colour, and expression; and whatever by its own nature is incapable of being represented under these conditions is clearly beyond its region. But all that eye hath seen, or ear heard, or the *heart* of man conceived, falls within its province. All, in fact, that is revealed to the *sentiment* of mankind is the legitimate object of Art. God, as He is in His own being, and apart from His communications to the spirits of His children, dwelling in light inaccessible and full of glory, can only be profaned and insulted by any attempt at representative shape; and with some rare and most unhappy exceptions, Art has reverently kept within its sphere, and indicated God, not by likeness, but by symbol,—by the colossal Hand of an omnipotence that sustains the universe,—or the piercing Eye whose omnipresence searches to its inmost heart. But though God can have no delineation of physical form, we must use the only word we have, Art can convey the impression of His moral attributes in ways exactly correspondent to those in which He himself imparts them, through the mediation of Nature, and of that light of the soul which looks through the faces of men. In all acts of prayer, of direct personal communion, of course Art,

and all thought of Art, must be absolutely removed. It may excite the desire for it, it may prepare us for it, but when the spirit of God enters into communion with the spirit of man, nothing intervenes, nothing else is present to consciousness. Though it is the office of Christ to lead us to the Father, to raise us by the divine attraction that dwells in himself from the human to the infinite perfection of which he is the Image, yet when he has brought us into that presence he retires himself, and leaves God and the soul alone. Now the highest religious Art can only make some faint attempt to represent the expression of the soul of Christ; and therefore, if, whenever we are face to face with God, even Christ has withdrawn, much more in such moments can Art have no further place, having already discharged its highest function. But this is no more than is true of Nature—the art of God. She too withdraws from immediate consciousness, in those high moments when she carries the soul into His direct presence :

“ His spirit drank  
The spectacle ; sensation, soul, and form  
All melted into him ; they swallowed up  
His animal being ; in them did he live,  
And by them did he live ; they were his life.  
In such access of mind, in such high hour  
Of visitation from the living God,  
Thought was not ; in enjoyment it expired.  
No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request ;  
Rapt into still communion that transcends  
The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,  
His mind was a thanksgiving to the power  
That made him ; it was blessedness and love.”\*

It is the mediation of Nature, her prophetic function, to convey to the soul the *sentiment* of God, the spirit that He expresses through her ; and so it is the highest office of Art not to imitate Nature, not to present an exact copy of her appearances and forms, but to produce the effect of these in the feeling communicated. The province of Art in relation to Religion is thus confined to the excitement of those spiritual sentiments and emotions which may be suggested by Nature, or more directly represented in the expression of the human soul ; and to the delineation of that ideal beauty, whether imaging the peace of God or the holiness of man, the conception of which, though never seen in realisation, either of these may be able to impart to the vision and the faculty divine. If Nature can awaken sentiments of God, then must it be possible for a competent artist to infuse the same sentiments into his picture of Nature, to give it the same expression,—and with the addition of the impress and interpretation of his own spirit. If the human countenance can

\* *The Excursion*, book i. p. 10.

reveal any thing of the indwelling of God in man, then religious Art can preserve it for the everlasting consolation of mankind. God touches us only through the mediation of outward nature and of our brethren; in no way else, except within the region of the invisible spirit, which does not belong to Art at all, does He manifest to us His goodness, or holiness, or peace; and of these, His only outward manifestations, Art can fully convey *the moral expression*, and moreover carry it into an ideal not yet expressed in nature or man, but through these intimated by God to the soul. Of course Art cannot supply the place of intercourse with nature, any more than it can supply the place of intercourse with man; but to one who knows what is in nature and what is in man, it can produce higher and fuller effects than either, for it can convey more intensely the spiritual sentiment of both. As long at least as man is morally imperfect,—as long as conception rebukes the actual of emotion and performance,—we shall have to look to Art for the countenance of human goodness, for the visible type and symbol of a soul at perfect peace with God. If we could look upon the face of Christ, it would be otherwise. To behold the glory of God shining there would more fully communicate to us what is meant by the image of the Father, than now when we have nothing to raise our own conceptions but the images which words convey. Who can doubt that if we saw the look cast upon Peter, it would move us in other fashion than now when we only read it from the page; or that if we stood in the judgment-hall, we should understand better what it was that so strangely awed Pilate; or that if we witnessed Gethsemane, we should know better what it is to pray, and what it is to have prayer answered? And if the living Christ could work thus, then must not the nearest approaches to his living looks which inspired Art can reach supply the mightiest aids to vivify the record, and to quicken the poor conceptions of ordinary men? Religion, so far as it consists in the religious states of human nature, is capable of having its representation in Art. And if it was impersonated in a Man, then that which places us most vividly within the moral presence of that Man, which enables us to see his countenance, and look into his eyes, and behold the depths of spiritual expression, would help to the most living interpretation of his words. We do not say that there is such Art in the world; but it is certain that there might be. We know well that there is danger in all this. We shall notice that presently.

There are some remarkable characteristics of an Art-language which peculiarly qualify it to be engaged in the ministry of Religion, especially in its applications in a wide and free Church for the union and elevation of mankind. The great object of a Church is to unite men in a common reverence and aspiration,

in faith, hope, and charity; and the only ground on which men are united is in the deep places of the affections, the emotions, and the conscience. Our agreements are those of the heart; our differences are those of the head. Feeling unites. Thought separates. The Church that addresses the intellect through forms of thought, will so far produce sectarianism. The Church that addresses the instinctive sentiments through forms of Art, will so far produce catholicism. It is conscience and sentiment that a Church appeals to; these make the holy bond of charity; and Art speaks to sentiment, and to sentiment alone. It pronounces no opinion,—traces no boundary-lines,—makes no definitions,—draws no distinctions,—utters no creed. It simply expresses and appeals to feeling, moral beauty, sentiment; and all sentiment, when it is deep, becomes Religion, and unites men in God its source. Is not Art, therefore, of all kinds, the true exponent of Religion, inasmuch as it appeals only to the *sentiment* which is universal, expresses the spiritual beauty which is of the very essence of life, and conveys it free from every thing that is disputable or opinionative? Do not Poetry and Music in the church blend hearts together, and waft upwards on a common breath of feeling those who, during the doctrinal sermon, were at discord with the preacher and with one another? We are not maintaining that there is no objective religious truth, which all men ought to seek and some few to teach; but only that a Church which has its chief interests in an objective truth which is not a universal recognition, and which, therefore, makes doubts, controversies, and separations, must necessarily, like the churches of the Reformation, be divorced from Art in all that makes the energy both of its life and of its appliances, and come to look upon unity not only as subordinate, but as a result rather to be shunned than sought. Such churches must be divorced from Art; for all true Art is the expression of moral beauty, and the recognition of moral beauty is a universal sentiment. In all, therefore, that characterises them they are excluded from its realm. Truth, it may be said, is nobler than Beauty. But for the possession of Truth, we only want Freedom; for the possession of Beauty we want union, the resting of the common heart upon the ideals accepted by conscience and affection,—those centres of the issues of life where all souls are one. Now you cannot make Art sectarian; you cannot express the doctrine of the Trinity in forms of Art. You may erect something that you call a representation—a column with three sides, and what are thought appropriate devices upon each,—such monstrous pieces of confusion as may be seen in the streets of Vienna and Naples; but this is mere symbolism, which no one would understand without an interpretation. That is, the symbol requires

the addition of a doctrinal discourse, and of itself conveys nothing. If you already accept the Trinity, you may associate it with this as you may with a trefoil; but there is nothing to help you either to love or to understand,—it conveys neither picture nor inner meaning; it is no more like the Trinity, or the doctrine of the Trinity, than a palm-branch is like a victory, or a ring is like eternity, or an anchor is like a hope. You cannot express the common doctrine of the Atonement in forms of Art. You may connect it arbitrarily, by a private association of your own, with the representation of Christ upon the Cross; and you may get this association established in a large number of minds. But the Picture will go at once to the deepest life of those who know nothing of the Doctrine; the holy sentiment will be conveyed, the tenet forgotten; and this will be the case even with those most devoted to the tenet, just in proportion as they are under the influence of the emotions of love, self-sacrifice, resignation, meek and trustful suffering, rest in God, and patient waiting for Him, which the picture expresses. The nobler is the picture, the less will it serve a dogmatic purpose. Nothing but a fetiche will avail for that; some shapeless thing that expresses nothing of itself, and to which, therefore, any meaning may be arbitrarily attached. Art, which is the visible or the audible expression of that spiritual beauty and sentiment which is a universal recognition, will not lend itself to a polemic Theology,—cannot do so without ceasing to be Art; and this alone is no slight or insufficient vindication of its rights to a perpetual ministry in the courts of Religion.

And not only is religious Art confined to the expression of sentiments which exist in all men, requiring to be drawn forth by the divine fullness of life; there are some feelings which at times all men have known, and which therefore may be called universal, which yet it utterly repudiates, and will not and cannot express. Music, it has been finely remarked, has no tone for any evil passion. It cannot express bad feeling, hatred, scorn, pride, impurity, moroseness. Neither can the formative Arts represent these, without falling at once out of the sphere of Religion; for religious Art is ideal Art. The preacher's discourse may be full of these foul passions, falsely presented as Religion; but the cathedral, or the picture, or the statue, or the anthem, will bear no association with them. Art may fall short in the expression of religious sentiment; it may be painfully deficient; but it will never make it utterly false—it will never change it into its opposite; it will be true and pure as far as it goes. And, impurity, or strong evil apart, Art does not readily lend itself even to a weakness or a superstition. Just as a great work of art succeeds in its object, in filling the soul with the ideals of

moral perfectness and spiritual beauty, does it become utterly unfitted for any lower purpose. The Madonnas that wink were never painted by Raphael. The Child-Christis that are sent for to perform miraculous cures,—the *Bambini* that arrive in state-carriages, — were never carved by Michael Angelo. It is because they are utterly destitute of beauty or spiritual meaning, that superstition is able to employ them. It is not true that Art nourishes superstition: on the contrary, superstition always fastens upon something that is not Art,—and if you could only raise her to the appreciation of true Art, the lower spirit in her could no longer live. What is here so nobly said of religious Music is more or less applicable to all religious Art:

The sentiment of unity, the strongest and deepest sentiment of which man is capable, the great affection into which all his affections flow to find, not lose themselves; which looks to the source when little wants conflict, and straightway they are reconciled in emulous ardour for the glory of the whole; which lifts a man above the thought of self, by making him in every sense fully himself, by reuniting his prismatic partly coloured passions into one which is as clear and universal as the light; the sentiment which seeks only universal harmony and order, so that all things, whether of the inner or of the outer world, may be perfectly transparent to the love in which they have their being, and that the sole condition of all peace and happiness, the consciousness of one in all and all in one, may never more be wanting,—that is what the common sense of mankind means by the *religious* sentiment, that is the pure essence of religion. Music is its natural language, the chief rite of its worship, the rite which cannot lose its sacredness; for music cannot cease to be harmony,—cannot cease to symbolize the sacred relationship of each to all,—cannot contract a taint, any more than the sunbeam which shines into all corners. Music cannot narrow or cloak the message which it bears; it cannot but cannot raise questions in the mind, or excite any other than a pure enthusiasm. It is God's alphabet, and not man's; unalterable and imperishable, suited for the harmony of the human passions and affections; and sent us, in this their long winter of disharmony and strife, to be a perpetual type and monitor—rather say an actual foretaste—of that harmony which must yet come. How could there be religion without music? That sentiment would create it again—would wake the elements out of the completest jargon of discords, if the scale and the chords, and all the use of instruments, were forgotten.—There *was* an age of faith, though the doctrinal statements and the forms thereof were narrow. Art, however, freed the spirit which the priest imprisoned. Music, above all, woke to celestial power and beauty in the bosom of a believing though an ignorant age. The Catholic Church hid this great secret of expression and of influence; and the faithful free servant served it in a larger spirit than itself had dreamed of. Where it could not teach the Bible, where its own *symbolic interpretations* thereof were perhaps little better than stones

for bread, it could breathe the spirit of the Bible and of all love and sanctity into the most ignorant and thoughtless worshipper through its sublime Masses, at once so joyous and so solemn, so soul-subduing and so soul-exalting, so full of tenderness, so full of rapture uncontrollable, so confident and so devout. In these the hearer did, for the time being, actually *live* celestial states. The mystery of the cross, and the ascension, the glorious doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, were not reasoned out to his understanding, but passed through his very soul, like an experience, in these all-permeating clouds of sound; and so the religion became in him an emotion, which could not so easily become a thought, which had better not become such thought as the opinionated teachers of the visible church would give him. The words of the *Credo* never yet went down with all minds; but their general tenor is universal, and music is altogether so. Music extracts and embodies only the spirit of the doctrine, that inmost life of it which all feel; and miraculously revivifies and transfigures the cold statements of the understanding with the warm faith of feeling. In music there is no controversy; in music there are no opinions; its springs are deeper than the foundations of any of these partition-walls, and its breath floats undivided over all their heads. No danger to the Catholic whose head is clouded by dull superstitions, while his heart is nourished and united with the life of all lives by this refreshing dew." *Æsthetic Papers*, p. 33.

There is a sense in which Art is superior to Nature in the expression of moral sentiment, for Art is the interpreter, and represents to all what Nature conveys only to the few. Nature suggests the ideals which Art embodies; and these ideals help the soul to higher ideals, for conception always transcends performance. The loveliest picture always excites the kindled imagination to something diviner still. On what does the impression of beauty in natural scenery depend,—say of a lagoon near Venice, where you have nothing but sand, and posts, and shallow water, and the sky above,—and yet by some magic of light, colour, and expression, the face of God is mirrored there? God has put that power into it in adaptation to man's spirit, and if you paint the scene, you must paint it not that it may be exactly like,—for in mere copying the soul would vanish,—but that it may wear the same expression. Nature is God's instrument for conveying the inspirations of genius to the souls of His children. The Jove, the Apollo, the Aurora, the Virgin, the Christ, are not in Nature. With Landscape-art there is a difference; not that it fails in the higher suggestions of sentiment and beauty, but that it wants the physical accompaniments of nature which stir and mingle with the whole being. No picture of a mountain can breathe the exaltation of mountain-air. But even in Art that is called mechanical, which is not thought of as rising above the useful, does not man's work seem to be nobler, that is, to have





forms you see amidst such splendour and such solemnity, until you perceive that the spirit of the place has subdued them all. A shepherd from the vast plains that surround Rome, the most uncouth, if the most picturesque, of beings, with a toilet supplied by Nature, not by Art, with sheepskin-coat and goatskin-breeches, with legs and feet protected from the bite of snakes by wrappings of leather from which the mud-deposits never are disturbed, with a tangle of hair like that of a wild creature, and a staff that when he rests it on the marble floor is higher than his head,—this commanding figure, looking like a savage from the woods, treads reverently, with a beautiful awe upon his grand features, but feeling himself entirely at home in the house of God, without the slightest sense of strangeness or intrusion, though the trains of cardinals sweep by. That magnificent Temple is never closed. It stands open from earliest light to faintest twilight, and no part of it is interdicted, and no man is privileged above another. And in their measure, every great cathedral is the same boon to the people,—their place of rest, and education, and refreshment, as well as their place of prayer. Who can tell what strength has been found there; what relief from wasting dullness and monotony; what blessings of mere cessation from strife and struggle, in which the soul has time to recover its tone; what gleams of comfort, and sweet thought, and coming rest, and of the face of Christ, making the daily burden, which felt so heavy when the weary foot stumbled at the door, one of the accepted signs of dear fellowship with him? Now an ordinary building will not accomplish this,—will not avail to change the whole order of thought and feeling; it must be a building which surrounds us at once with a life different from the life of the streets. Alas for that sectarianism which deprives our people of such a blessing, of such a daily sweetening and sanctification of life, and prevents their enjoying it even where they might! That sectarianism may bring us some other good, which else we could not have. It has need to do so. There are two beautiful descriptions by Dean Milman of the power and blessedness of religious architecture, which, though written of the middle ages, have an application for all time.

“ Thus, then, architecture was the minister at once and servant of the Church, and a vast proportion of the wealth of the world was devoted to the works of architecture. Nor was it in a secular point of view a wasteful pomp and prodigality. If the Church was the one building of the Priest, so was it of the people. It was the single safe and quiet place where the lowest of the low found security, peace, rest, recreation, even diversion. If the chancel was the Priest's, the precincts, the porch, the nave were open to all; the Church was all which the amphitheatre, the bath, the portico, the public place, had been to the

poor in the heathen cities. It was more than the house of prayer and worship, where the peasant or the beggar knelt side by side with the burgher or the Baron; it was the asylum, not of the criminal only, but of the oppressed, the sad, the toilworn, the infirm, the aged. It was not only dedicated to God; it was consecrated to the consolation, the peace, even the enjoyment of man.—Independent of the elevating, solemnising, expanding effects of this most material, and therefore most universally impressive of the Fine Arts, what was it to all mankind, especially the prostrate and down-trodden part of mankind, that though these buildings were God's, they were, in a certain sense, his own; he who had no property, not even in his own person, the serf, the villain, had a kind of right of proprietorship in his parish church, the meanest artisan in his cathedral. It is impossible to follow out to their utmost extent, or to appreciate too highly, the ennobling, liberalising, humanising, christianising effects of church-architecture during the Middle Ages." *Latin Christianity*, vol. vi. p. 580.

"The Gothic cathedral remains an imperishable and majestic monument of hierarchical wealth, power, and devotion; it can hardly be absolutely called self-sacrifice, for if built for the honour of God and of the Redeemer, it was honour, it was almost worship, shared in by the high ecclesiastic. That, however, has almost passed away; God, as it were, now vindicates to Himself His own. The cathedral has been described as a vast book in stone, a book which taught by symbolic language, partly plain and obvious to the simpler man, partly shrouded in not less attractive mystery. It was at once strikingly significant and inexhaustible; bewildering, feeding at once and stimulating profound meditation. Even its height, its vastness, might appear to suggest the Inconceivable, the Incomprehensible in the Godhead, to symbolise the Infinity, the incalculable grandeur and majesty of the divine works; the mind felt humble under its shadow as before an awful presence.—But even therein was the secret of the imperishable power of the Gothic cathedrals. Their hieroglyphic language in its more abstruse terms became obsolete and unintelligible; it was a purely hierarchical dialect; its meaning, confined to the hierarchy, gradually lost its signification even to them. But the cathedrals themselves retired as it were into more simple and more commanding majesty, into the solemn grandeur of their general effect. They rested only on the wonderful boldness and unity of their design, the richness of their detail. Content now to appeal to the indelible inextinguishable kindred and affinity of the human heart to grandeur, grace, and beauty, the countless statues from objects of adoration became architectural ornaments. So the mediæval churches survive in their influence on the mind and the soul of man. Their venerable antiquity comes in some sort in aid of their innate religiousness. It is that about them which was temporary and accessory, their hierarchical character, which has chiefly dropped from them and become obsolete. They are now more absolutely and exclusively churches for the worship of God. As the mediæval pageantry has passed away, or shrunk into less imposing forms, the one object of worship, Christ, or God in Christ, has taken more full and absolute posses-

sion of the edifice. Where the service is more simple, as in our own York, Durham, or Westminster, or even where the old faith prevails, in Cologne, in Antwerp, in Strasburg, in Rheims, in Bourges, in Rouen, it has become more popular, less ecclesiastical : every where the priest is now, according to the common sentiment, more the Minister, less the half-divinised Mediator. And thus all that is the higher attribute and essence of Christian architecture retains its nobler, and in the fullest sense, its religious power. The Gothic cathedral can hardly be contemplated without awe, or entered without devotion." p. 594.

Among the many wants of English society, and cold inexpressive aspects of English religion, there is no more crying evil than this, or more typical of all the rest, that the people have no home in the temples of God. An English place of worship is designed for those who come to hear a man preach, and for the most part is very badly adapted even for that. But at the best the man preaches, not the building ; nay, the building, with its convenient every-day look, is one of the influences which the man has to neutralise and subdue as best he can. When the formal service is over, the doors are locked. There would be little use in keeping them open, for there is nothing within to speak to the heart, the imagination, the affections ; and when the man is silent, the building says nothing. No one would go on a week-day into an ordinary Protestant church, or square meeting-house, for the elevation or refreshment of his spirit. He would find something not different in kind from an auction-room, a simply utilitarian arrangement for convenience. There is no sign there that any man loves the place. The whole is vulgar and business-like ; the general effect brings no veneration, but rather requires a strong veneration to get over it ; and you could not find one spot or recess of tender shadow with an appeal to human sympathies, so that you quietly kneel down as one drawn within the shelter of God. It is not possible there, by any help unborrowed from the soul, to dwell in His secret place, and abide under His shadow. The noblest worship of the spirit may ascend from that place ; but the place itself is nothing but an offence and obstruction to the spirit. Yet the people who worship there will call in the aid of Art to give beauty and spiritual expression to their own houses. It may be a miserable failure, a mere waste and prodigality of money ; but the attempt will be made, and made lavishly. A man will give a hundred pounds for a curtain that is to hang before the street,—and nothing to make all the glorious colours of heaven, with the images of the blessed beings that dwell there, and the symbols of all sacred things, enter into his house of prayer, instead of the hard, bare light that comes from and reveals the vulgar life that is around. A man will give hundreds, or thousands, for a religious picture

that presides over his dining-table, or for a piece of sculpture that mingles with the bustle of his entrance-hall, or is profaned by the idle talk and gossip of his drawing-room,—and nothing to lift the roof of his church nearer to the sky, and carry with it the thoughts and hearts that have been beaten down to earth. This utilitarianism in religious architecture is the invariable sign of a utilitarian spirit in the worshipper; of a spirit that may be earnest, severe, dutiful, but that is not rich, full, susceptible of impression, solemn, grand, attractive. It puts the question of him whom it may not be very well to imitate in any thing, “To what purpose is this waste?” It is the spirit of a sect, whose most vital principle is something esoteric, in which it does not expect the whole world to sympathise; and Protestantism in all its forms is as yet nothing but a sect, and therefore has no Art but that which it has inherited or entered into, and which it coldly sympathises with, and does not know how to use. Accordingly, our modern church-architecture is never marked by this, that it is simply expressive of religious feeling; it expresses ambition, and paltry display, and the love of ornament, in whatever meaningless confusion. It is not content to wear some one expression, to produce some one effect to which it might be competent with the moderate means at its command; it must aim at every thing at once. And so we have bits of every thing,—little pillars, though with no vaulting, little aisles, little transepts, and little chancels,—the whole producing the effect of a model or a toy. The real effects of Gothic architecture cannot be conveyed without vast space; and the single effect which even the smallest building might produce we do not aim at, because we do not take up Art as a language to express some feeling which is for ever after to speak to us again, but as a manufactured ornament for show. “It is the misfortune of most of our modern buildings,” remarks Mr. Ruskin, “that we would fain have an universal excellence in them; and so part of the funds must go in painting, part in gilding, part in fitting up, part in painted windows, part in small steeples, part in ornaments here and there; and neither the windows, nor the steeple, nor the ornaments, are worth their materials. For there is a crust about the impressible part of men’s minds, which must be pierced through before they can be touched to the quick; and though we may prick at it and scratch it in a thousand separate places, we might as well have let it alone if we do not come through somewhere with a deep thrust: and if we can give such a thrust any where, there is no need of another; it need not be even so ‘wide as a church-door,’ so that it be *enough*.” Modern Roman Catholic architecture, even in England, is much more free from this error. It understands better at what it aims, and Art is still to it a living language in which it expresses a sen-

timent and a meaning. But we must not wander from what was most upon our minds, the religious homelessness of our people. Can it be wondered at that Protestantism has never endeared itself to the hearts of the poor, when it has not a thought of, and makes not a provision for, some of the sorest wants of their condition—for their wants of retirement, of shelter, of quiet, of daily contact with something beautiful and solemn, of sympathy with the high in what is highest, and elevation above the meanness that surrounds them. There is none of this tender care in Protestantism: and until there is, the people will not love it. It shuts the door, and turns the key upon the multitudes who have no access elsewhere to peace, solemnity, or grace,—and having spoken its homily, leaves them for six days together without one refuge from the world, without one spot where they can feel their universal brotherhood, and empty their hearts of all sense of the bitterness of lot. It is true that except in its inherited Cathedrals it has not much to offer of this kind: but such as it has, it gives not. In a Roman Catholic cathedral in a Roman Catholic country nothing strikes a Protestant so much as symbolical of Christianity, as to see the people every where pressing up even to the altar, and touching the robes of the archbishop. This may sometimes spoil keeping and effect, it often does so; but it gives to the multitudes a Church in which they are at home, and which they feel to be not only the most splendid, but also the tenderest and the most impartial of mothers. The question is every where asked, What is to be done to elevate the masses, to counteract some of the evils of their crowded and ungraced condition? This is one thing that has manifestly to be done: to provide a place for the religious refreshment and purification of men; a place which, though devoted to their highest wants, does not refuse its sympathy to any gentle and serious mood, and which offers rest and change as well as consecration. The want of such places makes this sad weary question, What is to be done for the masses? far more importunate in England than in any foreign city. Why should not each of our great towns have, according to its extent, one, or two, or three such sacred buildings, spiritual asylums for the weary and the heavy-laden, places of the loftiest education for all, offering unremittingly their silent teachings, and at fixed times daily solemn music and prayer? There are other Asylums that might never have known some of their sad inmates, if a National Church had existed and provided such refuges as these. Expense is not to be mentioned; what every small town on the Continent can do, may be done in time by wealthy England; and if we had to throw into one the funds that now go to build some five or six unfilled churches, whose architecture at least confers no blessing on any one, the result would be great gain and no

loss. We would not have all churches to be of this kind; though all should be sufficiently noble in their architecture to have the power of throwing the mind into solemn and religious states. We have but what we give; and we must give thought, and toil, and all precious sacrifices, pouring out our costliest offerings upon that which is to react upon the feeling of the offerer. Preaching, however, is the great prophetic function of the Church, the direct appeal from soul to soul of man; and it must be admitted that the great churches of the Continent are as badly adapted for preaching, as our own are for the excitement of religious emotion. There need be no preaching in the few great Temples set apart as spiritual homes for the People; nor need any sound be heard in them but the voice of prayer and singing, and the organ's swell. It is an unquestionable evil in Roman Catholic worship that the office of the preacher sinks in the presence of a splendour, a symbolism, and a vastness, that subdues individual human power. When Goethe was at Rome, he sighed out the impatient wish that the Pope would give over his movements and genuflections, and open his golden mouth and instruct the listening world. The highest religious impulse is that which is communicated from spirit to spirit, and in places of religious instruction every thing should be arranged to aid this operation, to prepare for the reception of it, and not to overpower it. There is doubtless in material beauty and sublimity a tendency which must be guarded against, to oppress the more spiritual expression of religion from soul to soul of man. Amid the forms and magnificence of Cathedrals the heart often longs for some living utterance, for a prophet's fire and speech. Sometimes too it is felt that the gorgeous outside only covers the inside vanity and poverty, and that one earnest man would be better than all that can be wrought in stone or marble. And even to the most earnest man there must always be a difficulty in speaking in a way that will not lower the tone that vastness and Art have breathed. Who can preach up to a Cathedral, or sustain the emotions of the anthem when the music floats heavenwards along the lofty arches? He must be no ordinary man whose living spirit can subordinate all this as aids and accessories to his own inward fire, who is not paled and dwarfed by the material beauty and sublimity. In this connection, the following experience of preaching in Westminster Abbey is worth attending to:

"The Preacher rises. Now, I thought, in this liberty, at last, of utterance the spirit may soar as on eagle-wings to a pitch adequate to the unsurpassed attractions of the place. Ah! those very attractions prevent it. We may well be content with the plainness of our gathering and proceeding in the congregational order, from the reflection that, more than any priestly magnificence, it gives room for those persuasive

and receptive openings of the human breast, in the appeals and responses of simple duty and truth, which are hindered by the rigid methods of outward show, yet are loftier and dearer in the eye of Heaven than any exterior display, though of St. Peter's or Solomon's. Only that which we rely upon in any matter can stand us in much stead; and they who, in religion, have confidence in the flesh, in any outward thing, certainly can never be made perfect in the spirit. Leaning upon a staff is inconsistent with running or flying towards heaven. So I considered, as I looked around at the charms of art and external edification that stole away my regard from the mortal exhorter's feeble homily, and said in myself, What eloquence, less than that of Demosthenes, could fill this loaded air, and make itself heard among these voices, from the tombs all around, of dead poets and heroes and saints! What personal power could supersede this proud antiquity with present energy, and subdue this material sublimity and historic opulence into the mere subordinate service and humble following of the pulpit-signal from that little stature in the preacher's strain? He was altogether neutralised; so weakened by surrounding shows and superincumbent ordinances, it seemed almost better that he should hush. I must own the sin, if sin it were; but I could not help studying the beauteous stains upon the glass, and following the fine traceries of the windows, and over the ladders of art and grace there every where set before me, getting into the kingdom my own abstracted and wandering way, instead of being able to mount with the somewhat slow and heavy ascent of the actual performance; and my strong and decisive conclusion was, Oh, let me be satisfied with whatever hearing of the Word is my privilege in assemblies without great exhibition or any means of pretence, more than with all this colour and noise and march and heraldry of religion.—The constraining of the soul to love and righteousness by the earnest pleading of the human voice is worth more than all the church-formalism and architectural magnificence by which, through some fatal law of compensation, it is so commonly hindered and displaced." *Pictures of Europe framed in Ideas*, p. 244.

There ought perhaps to be two kinds of sacred edifice—a few to be the daily resort of the people, where Art need be under no control but that of her own laws, providing only for the spiritual delight and exhilaration of men,—the many, adapted for instruction and impression through the human voice, in which Art should be so restrained and chastened as to raise the tone of feeling without dissipating the inward collectedness of the soul, or making speech an impotent intrusion. What kind of architecture, and what use and adaptation of Art, would secure this latter effect in the most perfect measure, we are not competent to say; but the question is certainly capable of solution, or at least of a constant approach to it. We might be inclined for this special purpose, of preaching and adoration combined, to fix upon the Lombard or Romanesque, and to name the interior of Santa Agnese *fuori le mura* at Rome as a near approach to a perfect



example ; but this is a matter which we need not enter into at present, and which we are not qualified to determine.

It is impossible to introduce the name of Rome in connection with this subject of the service and ministry of Art in the public temples of Religion, without feeling that in her own person she presents an argument of a very complex kind against their beneficial operation ; and that facts seem to give a condemnatory answer on that spot where the experiment has been tried in the largest measure, and in the most perfect forms. We must face the objection—that Christianity looks most degraded in the capital of Art, and that Religion is least spiritual where chiefly she has made Art her organ. There is another fact to be encountered which may seem to strengthen the first, but perhaps really supplies an answer to it. It is, that where the highest works of religious Art are found, the popular taste in Art is most corrupted and debased. Since, then, it can scarcely be maintained that the presence of pure Art has corrupted the taste for Art, it must be the popular conceptions of Religion that create a demand for low Art, and not high Art that has lowered Religion. Paradoxical as it may seem, contrary at least to the indications of experience, we believe that Art may be a safer ally and instrument of Protestantism, than it ever can be of Romanism. For Art would supply some of the deficiencies of the Protestant worship, correct some of its excesses, take it out of the region of abstract thought, and present it as an outward reality to the heart and the imagination, whereas it only works in the direction of the natural tendencies of Romanism. Art, which would be the supplement and completion of the one, is too often but the instinctive indulgence and riot of the other. Art, too, can never safely be employed as the sole instrument of education and emotion ; and Romanism does not give her people enough of inward culture to keep Art in her subordinate position of handmaid to intellect and soul. The independent study of conscience, the direct communion with God, the severe search for truth, the reverence for reason and her laws, which make the very soul of Protestantism, tend to keep such pure and such growing ideals before both the mind and the imagination as would preserve against either the uncultivated or the superstitious abuse of Art. It is the absence of this earnest intellectual life, the slumber of thought, which causes the popular religion at Rome instead of thirsting for higher forms of Art, to sink below what it already possesses. Art can be the true reflex and exponent of a living Religion only with a people in the possession of spiritual liberty, and in the full exercise of a growing intelligence. It is the nature of the Religion itself, then, that corrupts religious Art, and the appreciation of it, at Rome. Romanism, which does not

grow, exhausted its possibilities of Art in the sixteenth century; reached the highest that it can reach, until it takes new life and ideals into itself; and since that period it was impossible that it should do any thing else than become corrupt, and be an instrument of corruption. It is certainly lamentable to see upholstery more honoured than Art, gauze and silk hangings concealing pictures, the noblest pillars swathed in flaunting damask, and huge "sunbeams of gilt wood blocking out statues and painted windows." At Rome, if you wish to see a Church in its beauty, you must take care to visit it when no grand ceremony is going on. If any great effect is desired, the upholsterer is sure to have been called in. Mr. Ruskin states this with discrimination, and lays the blame 'not upon Art, but upon the Religion which has long ceased to furnish any inspiration to Art. "Let us not ask of what use our offering is to the church: it is at least better for us than if it had been retained for ourselves. It may be better for others also: there is at any rate a chance of this; though we must always fearfully and widely shun the thought that the magnificence of the temple can materially add to the efficiency of the worship, or to the power of the ministry. Whatever we do, or whatever we offer, let it not interfere with the simplicity of the one, or abate, as if replacing, the zeal of the other. That is the abuse and fallacy of Romanism, by which the true spirit of Christian offering is directly contradicted. The treatment of the Papists' temple is eminently exhibitory; it is surface-work throughout; and the danger and evil of their church-decoration altogether lie not in its reality—not in the true wealth and art of which the lower people are never cognisant—but in its tinsel and glitter, in the gilding of the shrine and painting of the image, in embroidery of dingy robes and crowding of imitated gems; all this being frequently thrust forward to the concealment of what is really good or great in their buildings." Church music has undergone the same corruption, presenting the highest perfection and the lowest degradation. There upon occasion may be heard the unearthly strains of Palestrina and the grand cadences of the Gregorian chant; and there, ordinarily, the music and musicians, and indeed the whole display, seem borrowed from the opera. There is unfortunately no architecture at Rome to raise an impassable barrier to such abuse. The Roman basilicas, stately as they are, lend themselves too readily to sensuous beauty. There is no grand Gothic at Rome; and the Gothic, wherever it rises to its full proportions, is secure against either upholstery or fiddles. The natural symbolism of this sublime architecture, the real and material rather than the artistic might with which it lifts the soul above smallness and vanities, presenting in the unity of its impression, along with its vastness and infinite variety, the worthiest

emblem of spiritual power that the thought of man has ever put into form, no where presents in Rome its severe correction to all meaner taste,—nor, indeed, in its purity, any where in Italy. There are certainly some remarkable facts, which must not be overlooked, showing what kind of evils may be connected with religious Art in uncultivated and fanatical minds; but these evils arise out of a worship that Protestantism would reject, or out of a class of feelings from which it would purge away the dangerous element. It is sufficiently startling to hear that a picture of St. Sebastian and by a painter of such religious fervour and purity as Fra Bartolomeo, had to be withdrawn from the church of the Annunziata at Florence, in consequence of the representations of the confessors who received confidential communications which made its removal necessary.\* This morbid mingling of religious with more human affections must always be inseparable from saint-worship; and the feebler or more earthly minds may not be protected from it even by the purest representative types. Savonarola when under the influence of an iconoclastic rage against corrupt forms of sacred Art, yet distinctly perceived that it was the religious feeling that required to be purified and spiritualised; and where this is wanting, Roman Catholic Art, even in its severest manner, may ally itself too much with our mortal nature. When the Pope complained of the nude figures in the Last Judgment, Michael Angelo, with a fitting reliance on the purity of Art, scornfully answered, “Do you look to reforming the souls of your people, and the figures will reform themselves.” But even on this, the frailest side of Roman Catholicism, Art has been so far from lending itself to the debasement of Religion, that it has successfully striven to take the natural evil out of its doctrines and practices; and all the great painters have represented the Saints and the Virgin in such purely spiritual expression, or under such forms of holy and unearthly beauty, as if they strove to paint not the face but the serene and spotless soul, that they have actually unrealised them, and presented them as celestial ideals to the worshipper. In this respect Art, true to her divine calling, has really raised a barrier against abuse, and protected Roman religion from mere natural tendency.

It is not, however, in relation to the public administration of Religion, but to the excitement and exaltation of spiritual sentiment in private, that the formative arts are chiefly to be considered. Architecture and music may have an insensible operation in toning the mind, and disposing it to receive an influence different from their own, as from prayer and preaching,—but pictures and sculpture do not produce these general effects, they require individual examination, demand a very earnest and

\* Rio, p. 285.

thoughtful attention to themselves, and whilst they act are sole ministers to the spirit. Rio finely remarks that there are moments when the soul is absolutely thirsting for something to admire, in which the visible expression of holy goodness and spiritual beauty would raise in us a divine enthusiasm of aspiration and belief. The lives of the saints abound in proofs of this affinity between Religion and Art. How Religion inspired Art, and Art returned the inspiration to Religion, may be shown most purely perhaps in the life of one who was both saint and artist, Beato Fra Angelico da Fiesole. "Fra Angelico," says Milman, "became a monk that he might worship without disturbance, and paint without reward." He is the most eminent example of the mystical or devotional school; of that class of painters who pursued Art as an offering and a worship; who sought to express humility and compunction of heart, the ecstasy of contemplation, the purity and bliss of heaven; and who, whilst rejoicing in the beauty and brilliancy of Nature, and freely representing the full life of God in His works, saw nothing with delight in man but the features of the seraph or the saint. He painted for the glory of God; and when tempted by worldly offers, he would put aside the snare, saying that "the painter had need of quietness and to live without anxiety, and that he who would work for Christ must live in Christ." He was offered the archbishopric of Florence; but the poor monk deprecated such promotion with more earnestness than others sought it, and supplicated the Pope not to lay such a worldly burden upon his soul. He never painted without first purifying his soul in prayer and seeking direction from God; and when he felt himself inspired, he considered that he was not afterwards at liberty to depart from the expression that had been suggested to him. "He would never," says Vasari, "retouch or amend any of his paintings; but left them as they had come from his hand, believing that such was the will of God. He never took up a pencil without prayer, or painted a crucifix without tears bathing his cheeks. He spent the whole of his life in the service of God, and in doing good to the world and to his neighbour. And truly a gift like his could not descend on any but a man of most saintly life; for a painter must be holy himself before he can express holiness." Here there can be no doubt that Art ministered to Religion, that the painter exalted the saint, even as a good deed blesses and strengthens a merciful man. Dean Milman has appreciated the spiritual character of the Art of the Cloister, and its services to Religion, with a noble breadth and tenderness of feeling:

"The Monkish painters were masters of that invaluable treasure, time, to work their study up to perfection; there was nothing that

urged to careless haste. Without labour they had their scanty but sufficient sustenance; they had no further wants. Art alternated with salutary rest, or with the stimulant of art—the religious service. Neither of these permitted the other to languish into dull apathy, or to rest in inexpressive forms or hues. No cares, no anxieties, probably not even the jealousies of Art, intruded on these secluded Monks; theirs was the more blameless rivalry of piety, not of success. With some perhaps there was a latent unconscious pride, not so much in themselves as in the fame and influence which accrued to the Order, or to the convent, which their works crowded more and more with wondering worshippers. But in most it was to disburden, as it were, their own hearts, to express in form and colour their own irrepressible feelings. They would have worked as passionately and laboriously if the picture had been enshrined, unvisited, in their narrow cell. They worshipped their own works, not because they were their own, but because they spoke the language of their souls. They worshipped while they worked, worked that they might worship; and works so conceived and so executed (directly the fetters of conventionalism were burst and cast aside, and the technical skill acquired) could not fail to inspire the adoration of all kindred and congenial minds. Their pictures, in truth, were their religious offerings, made in single-minded zeal, with untiring toil, with patience never wearied or satisfied. If these offerings had their meed of fame, if they raised the glory or enlarged the influence, and so the wealth of the Order, the simple artists were probably the last who would detect within themselves the less generous and less disinterested motive." *Latin Christianity*, vol. vi. p. 616.

It may be said that the creations of these artists are deficient in power; but the only power they valued is the power that lies in the expression of the holiest experiences of the soul. They gave the ideals which they had reached through entire worldly abnegation as the contribution of contemplation to the piety of action and of life, and without Angelico we could not have had Raphael, who in fact has freely taken his types and given them fullness and strength. Surely there was, and still is, something of the sweetest presence of Religion in Art so withdrawn and sanctified from ambition, with men who when they painted, as when they prayed, entered the closets of their souls, and shut the door upon the world. We may look elsewhere for strength; but we still go to the saint for inspiration. Rio has eloquently expressed this:

"The progress of an artist who seeks his inspiration beyond the sphere of sensible objects does not merely consist in the variety or picturesque grouping of the subject, nor in the depth and fusion of the colours, nor even in the delicacy and purity of the design, but rather in the development and progressive perfection of certain types, which, concealed at first within the most secret recesses of his imagination, and afterwards regarded as a long and religious exercise for his pencil, had at length become intimately combined with all that was poetical

and exalted in his nature. It is the glory of the Umbrian school that it unceasingly pursued this transcendental aim of Christian Art, without allowing itself to be seduced by example or distracted by clamour. It would seem that a special blessing was attached to the particular localities sanctified by the presence of St. Francis of Assisi, and that the perfume of his holiness preserved the fine arts from corruption in the neighbourhood of that hill where so many painters had successively contributed to decorate his tomb. Thence arose, like sweet-smelling incense to heaven, prayers, the fervour and purity of which insured their efficacy; thence descended like beneficent dew on the more corrupt cities of the plain, inspirations of penitence, which rapidly spread over the whole of Italy." *The Poetry of Christian Art*, p. 180.

All pictures that appeal at once to religious feelings, and give a new faith in the reality of spiritual goodness and beauty, of the indwelling of God in man, are of this character, whatever may be their age. It is true that Art can only represent humanity; but when it is remembered that the highest manifestations of God were given in a Man, the Art that enables us to know more of his soul, to understand better the emotions of those who fell down at his feet, or kissed the hem of his garment, or kept silence in his presence from reverence, or were astonished at his doctrine and constrained to testify that never man spake like this man, must take the rank of an additional Gospel to the world. No doubt there was a time when the only vivid knowledge that the people possessed of the events of Christ's life was derived from Art-representation. And if the letter of Gregory II. to Leo the iconoclastic Emperor, in defence of religious pictures, shows that they had given himself a very imperfect acquaintance with Bible history, it is more than likely that without such means the poor Pope would have been found in a condition of still more lamentable ignorance. But now religious pictures are directed to wants which books do not address, and which even the artist cannot supply to himself until he sees his ideals before his eyes. Every one has felt at times a gleam of moral light entering his soul, not only from the portraiture of him in whom all perfections meet, but from the expression of single hues of the spiritual life in saint or martyr. Indeed religious Art, within the realm of what is possible to it, is no where more wanting than, as might be expected, in the accomplishment of its one highest task. The great painters seem to have shrunk from all sustained effort to represent under the various aspects of trial and experience the full perfection of the Son of Man. Nor have we even one representation of single moments in that life, of single expressions of that spirit, that can be said fully to satisfy the eye of the heart. In Raphael's latest work, the Transfiguration—a work left unfinished, we must remember—whatever may be thought of the other merits of the

picture, the spiritual expression in the face of the Christ is an utter disappointment. In sculpture, from Michael Angelo to Thorwaldsen, we turn away with a sad shock to expectation. Even the Pietà in St. Peter's, which redeems Michael Angelo from the naturalistic forms in the Sistine Chapel and in Santa Maria sopra Minerva, is yet far from enough. Still we must be thankful for what we have, as in Leonardo's somewhat traditional head, and in works so full of earnest life as Angelico's series of some of the great moments in the Saviour's history in the Academy at Florence, and Duccio's in the Cathedral of Sienna.\* Even from pictures that we feel to be imperfect, how much we gain, to what inner depths of feeling do we seem admitted, if the painter has only poured out his soul upon them! A look is with us still from a face of Christ over the tribune of the church of a monastery on the ascent from the town of Albano to its Lake. The church, otherwise empty, seemed full of the presence of him who said, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God." There was no one of whom to ask a question. We sought out a friar, who said that the picture was Guercino's; but he spoke as of a matter that did not greatly interest him, and we think he must have erred. What fullness of teaching more than from all commentaries, what correction of all littleness, what transformation of feeling, what a new sense of the alliance of the divine goodness with the nature of man, would come to us from a "Life of Christ" presented with the right expression through the eyes to the soul! Christianity is not yet spiritual enough, and Art is not yet perfect enough, for that Evangel to be delivered to man; but it will be accomplished yet. It is reserved, with many other things, for the Church of the Future. What is now conveyed to us in some few pictures, as in a Crucifixion by Cigoli, where, whilst all that is merely physical is most solemnly present in the mysterious shadow in which it seems to be withdrawn, spiritual expression actually radiates from the pallor of the brow,—may enable us to conceive what such a full revelation would be. Even representations proceeding from conceptions of Religion not our own, often affect us with a strange realising power. Who does not feel for the moment a new confidence in the might of goodness, in the rush of the bright Seraph on the dark form of Satan? And who can look upon the Angel of the Resurrection † sitting on the tomb, and waiting for the signal to blow the trumpet, without feeling that it might sound ere our suspended breath returned? As an example of the new emotions and experiences,

\* Engraved and published under the editorship of the late Dr. Emil Braun, secretary to the Prussian Archæological Society, Rome; a man of profound learning and knowledge of Art, but adorned by still higher gifts of spiritual insight.

† The work of Tenerani.

of the new sense of the indwelling of God in man and woman, communicated by religious pictures even to one who does not participate in the conceptions which perhaps raised those pictures to so divine a beauty,—we take the following description of the Madonna di San Sisto :

“The curtain which, painted in the picture, flanks the figures on each side, significantly marks the subject as a mystery.—The action has no scene, no footing on earth : floating among the clouds angels and glorified saints adore the Mother and her Son. From the foot of the picture look up two half-seen figures of lovely cherub-infants, in calm and unimpassioned worship. At each side kneels a saint : on one hand a youthful female martyr ; on the other an aged Roman bishop. The beautiful maiden turns away from the splendour of the opening vision, to look, softly smiling, on the angel children : the venerable priest wears his white tunic and gold-woven robe ; but the triple mitre, the ensign of power, is laid at his feet, and the old man’s gray and crownless head is turned upwards motionless and adoring. Above, from amidst a throng of cherub faces shining through the golden beams of the dawning, issues the holy Mother, bearing in her arms the divine Child. Her attitude is inconceivably majestic : she treads not on the cloud ; it bears her forward. Her youthful head is loveliness become divine ; the sweet countenance is quietly and solemnly happy ; trouble has touched the deep eyes, but left scarcely a shadow there ; and on the features dwell grace to men, and love to the holy Infant, who, reposing on her bosom, looks forward with prophetic eyes, too deeply expressive for any childhood but that of divinity incarnate, and foreseeing agony and final triumph.” *Spalding’s Italy*, vol. iii. 345.

We add this testimony of the impression produced upon him, from one whose separate description of the picture itself, with more effusion of feeling, is much less accurate :

“Never before by any like production had I been quite abashed and overcome. I could except to, and study, and compare, other pictures : this passed my understanding. Long did I inspect, and often did I go back to re-examine this mystery, which so foiled my criticism, and constrained my wonder, and convinced me as nothing visible beside had ever done, that if no picture is to be worshipped, something is to be worshipped ; that is to be worshipped which such a picture indicates and portrays. But the problem was too much for my solving. I can only say, it mixed for me the transport of wonder with the ecstasy of delight ; it affected me like the sign of a miracle ; it was the supernatural put into colour and form ; for certainly no one who received the suggestion of those features, the sense of those meek, subduing eyes, could doubt any longer, if he had ever once doubted, of there being a God, a heaven, and both before and beyond the sepulchre an immortal life. No one who caught that supernal expression of the whole countenance could believe it was made of matter, born of mortality, had its first beginning in the cradle, or could be laid away in the grave, but rather that it was of a quite dateless and everlasting tenure. I would



be free even to declare that in the light which played between those lips and lids, was Christianity itself,—Christianity in miniature, for the smallness of the space I might incline to express it, but that I should query in what larger presentment I had ever beheld Christianity so great. Mont Blanc may fall out of the memory, and the Pass of the Stelvio pass away ; but the argument for religion,—argument I call it,—which was offered to my mind in the great Madonna of Raphael, cannot fail." *Pictures of Europe, &c.* p. 204.

There is an objection often, but ignorantly, made to the employment of religious Art, that by embodying a spiritual ideal it arrests its development, stops further growth within the imagination,—and that so Art may petrify sentiment just as Creeds stiffen thought. There is no analogy whatever between the two cases, any more than there is between poetry and formal logic. Whatever is addressed to sentiment will perpetually awaken fresh sentiment ; and it is the very essence of its genius that for ever and for ever it creates and calls forth more than it expresses. Theology may pretend to present to the intellect the ultimate form of truth, and the intellect may perish under an acceptance of the offer ; but Art is guilty of no such presumption—it offers the best that it has only as a gleam of the unapproachable Beauty, and presents it to the creative powers of imagination and feeling, not to satisfy but to kindle their own conceptions. It is only when Art is dead, shut up in traditional types, that this evil attends her. The Art that is alive, that at any time was alive, that ever gushed fresh from a great soul, will always be alive, and quicken fresh life perpetually. We might as well complain of the everlasting hills that they limited our sentiment of God, as complain of a great ideal picture that it defines the indefinable. It is, in fact, a stimulus to faculties that are inexhaustible, in a direction that is unlimited. Nor is there any weight in another objection—that Art, having more power to represent the contemplative than the active side of life, may fix a false type of the perfect religious character in the conceptions of men. For this might be said of all the religious aids that carry us into the presence of God—the fountain of all goodness, loveliness, and greatness. They all conduct to contemplation as the nurse of inspiration—the undefiled source in which all great purposes of action, all thoughts of high sacrifice, must have their rise ; and, in fact, the whole of religious history shows that the saint *is* the hero, that whoever outwardly acts above the world must inwardly dwell above the world. We might as well complain of Gethsemane that it did not exhibit the open testimony and the mighty powers of the Judgment-hall and Calvary ; whilst in fact the Judgment-hall and Calvary were already encountered and conquered in that solitary prayer. It is true that Art can only give

one expression at a time of the human aspects of Religion ; but all the spiritual forces may be there in presence, under that one aspect, and each of them in its season the very medicine of the soul. It is as needful to us, betimes, to see the face of the hermit, the serene face of happy solitude, of inward contentment, and of rest in God, as to catch the eye of the good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Ruskin, in a remarkable note appended to his *Lamps of Architecture*—remarkable as a testimony to the importance and the difficulties of the question—has laid down the whole ground-plan of the subject we have been imperfectly dealing with. We have reserved the passage, because it is a ground-plan that we are not capable of building upon. And we give it now both for the sake of its healthy cautions, and that by its suggestions and directions, our readers may at least have the benefit of its masterly outline of a fuller survey :

“Much attention has lately been directed to the subject of religious art, and we are now in possession of all kinds of interpretations and classifications of it, and of the leading facts of its history. But the greatest question of all connected with it remains entirely unanswered, What good did it do to real religion ? There is no subject into which I should so much rejoice to see a serious and conscientious inquiry instituted as this ; an inquiry undertaken neither in artistical enthusiasm nor in monkish sympathy, but dogged, merciless, and fearless. I love the religious art of Italy as well as most men ; but there is a wide difference between loving it as a manifestation of individual feeling, and looking to it as an instrument of popular benefit. I have not knowledge enough to form even the shadow of an opinion on this latter point, and I should be most grateful to any one who would put it in my power to do so. There are, as it seems to me, three distinct questions to be considered. The first, What has been the effect of external splendour on the genuineness and earnestness of Christian worship ? The second, What the use of pictorial or sculptural representation in the communication of Christian historical knowledge, or excitement of affectionate imagination ? The third, What the influence of the practice of religious art on the life of the artist ?

In answering these inquiries, we should have to consider separately every collateral influence and circumstance ; and, by a most subtle analysis, to eliminate the real effect of art from the effects of the abuses with which it was associated. This could be done only by a Christian ; not a man who would fall in love with a sweet colour or sweet expression, but who would look for true faith and consistent life as the object of all. It never has been done yet, and the question remains a subject of vain and endless contention between parties of opposite prejudices and temperaments.” *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, second edition, p. 201.

We are utterly incompetent to the inquiry here mapped out,

and have directed our remarks not to the historical investigation and analysis, but rather to the kind of beneficial relations which Art is capable of sustaining towards Religion. That there are such relations, whatever be their exact limitations, cannot be doubted. The interests into which Churches now pour their most eager life, furnish no objects to Art. There is no universal agreement *as to what it is* in Christianity that is to be most intensely loved and realised; nothing, therefore, that can give inspiration, or take form, within the musing heart. We are far from the time, and farther from the feelings of the time, when a Picture worthily embodying a conception dear to the heart of a whole people could raise such emotions of enthusiasm that the part of the town whence it issued from the painter's studio is called to this day, though it is more than five hundred years ago, Borgo Allegri, the District of Joy. These feelings, with their then directions, never can return. Art made the most of them, and exhausted them, and died in their exhaustion. When she revives, it will be with an inspiration that shall never pass away. For the present, Theology, with its notional distinctions, every where prevails over that human impersonation of Religion which is the highest object of Art, as it was the only perfect embodiment of Revelation. But whenever it shall come to be universally felt that Christianity is the life of Christ—that Christianity *is* Christ—the glory of God in the face of Man, God manifest in the flesh—then religious Art shall be called—in a new spirit, and with a reverence for human nature, the very nature given to it to represent, never before known upon the earth—to an inexhaustible work. We have only to wait for a universal Christian realism, for the most glorious Art to take its rise. Whether in the solemn assemblies where the spirit of a man is to kindle and instruct the spirits of his fellows, the formative Arts are to be perpetual ministers, as presenting the nearest symbols of the presence of God in human nature,—or whether, as fixing thought too much upon themselves, they are to be reserved for private excitement and delight in churches or elsewhere, we do not know,—but there is a clear boundary which they cannot pass. Their sphere is man, not God. There need be no fear that the spirituality of Religion will not be jealously, reverently guarded. Art will ever know her own province. Architecture and Music, as of indefinite expression, may wing the soul to the Most High; Painting and Sculpture will give us more and more the visible presence of the Image of God in man. And when the universal heart of Christendom shall rest upon the intuitions of holy beauty that find their objective forms in the perfection of Jesus Christ through all the manifestations of his spirit, and the whole Church is at one as to what it loves and places first as the expo-

ment of God,—then will Art enter upon its great ideal work, as the universal language of Religion—to give the portraiture of inward beauty,—to enable us to look more nearly upon the face of Christ,—to paint the features of a soul that is in the likeness of the Deity.

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ART. III.—BALZAC EN PANTOUFLES. BY LEON GOZLAN.

*Balzac en Pantoufles.* By Léon Gozlan. 1 vol. Paris: Michel Levy. 1856.

THE works of some men stand alone, apart, and are in themselves self-sufficient. With those who wrote them you need have nothing to do; they are not necessarily referred to their creator, and the breath they breathe comes not immediately from him, nor does his life-blood seem to flow through them. Not so with Balzac. You are compelled to know *him*, or you can but dimly appreciate his works. Critically speaking, it is not our present purpose to touch upon these works, but upon their author only; we do not mean to point out how far they possessed or were wanting in merit, but why they *were*, and why, being as they were, they could derive their existence from no one else save him alone.

Take any hero or heroine of Madame Sand (except Indiana),—let it be Valentine, or Jacques, or Consuelo, or Mauprat, or any other,—and there is no reason why they should not spring from some other brain than hers. There would be nothing revolting to our sense in the supposition of their being conceived by Alfred de Musset, for instance, or any other like-minded writer. So, again, we might easily admit the notion that Alexandre Dumas had written *Marie Tudor* or *Angelo*, instead of Victor Hugo; or accept the proof, were it afforded us, that *Monte Cristo* was the work of Eugène Sue, or *Arthur* that of Charles de Bernard. A fact, however, of which we feel instinctively and absolutely sure is, that not one of these creations could be the work of Balzac, nor could one of his emanate from any of the celebrated writers we have named. Let us again repeat, that it is no question of talent with us just now, but merely a question of individuality, and of the double impossibility in the case of Balzac—that he should not write his works, and that any other but he should write them.

His entire sincerity, his absence of all scepticism (not in a

religious, but in a moral and intellectual point of view), and his total want of affectation, render Balzac one of the most interesting studies that human nature, fashioned and complicated by the hyper-civilisation of modern France, has to offer us. Out of all those who in France have achieved glory within the last thirty years by works of fiction, Balzac only is himself, always himself, and nothing but himself. *Soy quien soy*, he may say with the Spanish proverb; and neither can the public nor even posterity disturb his imagination in the smallest degree. "He took no pains to dress up his own ghost," as M. Gozlan truly says; *Il ne faisait pas la toilette à son ombre*. No, he lived his own works, if the expression may be allowed; and the public merely succeeded to them after they had been enjoyed by their creator. Balzac resembles the Maria Wuz of Jean Paul, who, being too poor to purchase the works he hears of, imagines and writes for himself a whole library full of books corresponding to the titles that take his fancy most. He showers his riches upon himself *first*, and then calls in the world to partake of what remains. The author is simply a consequence of the man; but the man, what was he? Two passages in M. Gozlan's little volume will tell us; for in those two passages is contained *all* Balzac.

It was on the 15th of March 1840, a Sunday, at about noon. The night before had taken place that extraordinary representation of *Vautrin*, at the Porte Saint-Martin, at which half Paris was present, and which was barely allowed by the audience to come to a close. Careless of the results, whether to others or to himself, possessed by the idea of representing the forms which surrounded him on all sides, and which he regarded as constituting "society," the author of *Le Père Goriot* had thrust pellmell upon the stage peers, princes, *forçats*, fraudulent bankrupts, *grandes dames*, footmen, dandies, thieves, and saints; all "rubbing clothes" together, and more or less attached to those same wires, which, according to him, moved directly or indirectly all the puppets of the *comédie humaine*. "Society" was scared; and when Frederick Lemaître, who played the hero of the piece which he expected to revive the fame of *Robert Macaire*—when Frederick in the last act appeared so inimitably like Louis Philippe in dress, attitude, countenance, and manner, that no possibility existed of ignoring the resemblance, the Duc d'Orleans, then prince royal, who had sat through the whole, had the satisfaction of seeing the Paris *bourgeoisie* rise indignantly and loudly protest against what was felt to be an insult cast upon itself in the person of its incarnation-supreme. The blow was, it might be thought, a severe one for Balzac; for—jumping at once and immediately, as he always did, from a plan to its perfect completion—he had, during the time that

*Vautrin* was being rehearsed, believed himself actually in possession of the autocracy of the theatrical world, and in the receipt of hundreds of thousands of francs ! The scene described by M. Gozlan opens, then, as we have said, upon the very morning of the day on which such high-flown golden-pinioned illusions were dashed to earth ; and we sympathise with the feelings of a friend who is resolved to be the first to console, yet who is not without a secret desire that "the visit were well over," and the task of condolence with ill-luck ended. But if the visitor is painfully embarrassed, not so he who occasions his embarrassment. Balzac is perfectly calm ; and with what his chronicler so justly calls "his *solar eyes*" fixed on space, is absorbed in the contemplation of another idea, that, in the lapse of twelve hours, has already taken root in his brain, grown up, and been born, for him, into the world of quite tangible realities. He shakes hands with Léon Gozlan, and without leaving him time to open his mouth, he exclaims—

"My dear fellow, just look at that strip of ground at the bottom of the garden. Do you see ?" "Yes ; well, and what then ?" "Why, in a few days hence, I shall have established there a dairy which will entirely furnish all the surrounding population with the best milk in the world ; a thing they cannot have at this present moment, because they are just between Paris and Versailles—two sponges that absorb every drop of milk ;" and flying from detail to detail, the illustrious *romancier* proves to his visitor how he has *secured* for himself an annual revenue of 3,000 frs. by milk ! But this is not all. Before M. Gozlan can venture upon a remark—"A little further on," continues Balzac, "you perceive a splendid piece of ground" . . . "Where nothing at all is growing," the listener this time cannot refrain from interrupting. "For the moment, nothing !" echoes Balzac ; but then comes pouring down the full tide of description of all that *is to be* ! That barren piece of earth, "where nothing at all is growing," is quite uncontestedly to yield more than the mud-manured banks of the Nile ! and here is the reason thereof : La Quintinie, the head-gardener of Louis XIV., used to grow the vegetables destined for the king's table alone, in a reserved spot of the gardens of Versailles ; and since the middle of the 17th century these royal plants have continued generation after generation (in spite even of the Revolution), as surely as the occupants of the throne themselves ; artichokes and asparagus, cabbages and French beans, have succeeded each other in all their pride and privilege of race, even as Louis XVI. succeeded Louis XV., and Louis Philippe took the place of Charles X. and Louis XVIII. La Quintinie's vegetables are still the glory of the royal table of France ; but of the royal table only. "Now," cries Balzac exultingly, "I possess the seeds of every vegetable in La Quintinie's kitchen-garden ; and I will extend the benefit of the possession to all such as are rich enough to pay for it. I will sow them all in that piece of ground yonder ; and there again (to make a

ridiculously moderate estimate of the profits) I have secured to myself another 3,000 francs a-year!" "Which, with the dairy, makes 6,000," observes Gozlan gravely, and by this time quite entering into the spirit of his part. "Precisely," repeats Balzac; "but that is nothing. Look there to the left, at that hard hot dry ferruginous soil. Malaga will be to be had there, *mon cher*; and I can have the vines whenever I choose. *This* is a considerable undertaking, and" (with a kind of compassionate smile) "I presume I shall not be accused of overvaluing such wine if I put its price at 3,000 francs the pipe, which at four pipes a-year (the yield will not go much beyond that) brings me in a clear income of 12,000 francs." Gozlan counts quite seriously upon his fingers, murmuring, "Twelve for *vin de Malaga*, and six between vegetables and milk; in all eighteen." "Without counting the walnut-tree!" shouts the author of the *Peau de Chagrin*, turning round and pointing to a fine old tree of the species just named, which he had bought very dear of the adjoining *commune* of Sèvres. "The *what*?" ejaculated Gozlan, entirely thrown off his guard. "The walnut-tree," rejoined his host, quite calmly. "But that is a long story, I will tell you all about it later; suffice to say that it is worth 2,000 francs a-year, which, added to the other 18,000, makes a net rental of 20,000 francs. *Eh, mon Dieu, oui!*" he then resumed with the air of a man who has put his "house in order," and looked the pros and cons of his position in the face in a business-like way,—"*Eh, mon Dieu, oui!* 20,000 francs a-year, that is what they have reduced me to by suppressing *Vautrin!*" "*Suppressing Vautrin?*" exclaims Gozlan all aghast; for he merely supposed the piece to have been a failure, nothing more. "Do you mean to say they have suppressed *Vautrin?*" "Bless my soul!" says his friend, "you did not know that?" (How should he?) "Well, look here, read this paper;" and he gives him the official letter he has that morning received, and in which M. de Rémusat, then Minister of the Interior, by the intervention of M. Cavé, Chargé des Beaux Arts, brings to the knowledge of M. de Balzac, that (without any further explanation) the "representations of the play entitled *Vautrin* are and remain suspended."

But, occupied as he had been with matters of "serious" interest respecting the "administration of his fortune," Balzac had forgotten all about *Vautrin* and the mishap of the night before. He was engrossed by "business;" the minister's letter was thousands of miles away; and he had the comfortable sensations of a man who has done his duty, and resolutely devoted himself to the "practical realities" of life.

At this let no reader cavil or be surprised; *these were*, for Balzac, the "practical realities" of existence. For him, the dairy he had not built, the cows he had not bought, the land he had not purchased, the seeds he had not sown, the milk and vegetables that could *not* feed the surrounding populations, the *vin de Malaga*, to produce which not a stone of the soil belonged to him, the vines then peaceably growing on the coast of Spain,

the wonderful walnut-tree,—all these things were *realities*, and Balzac was busied in noting down the investment of the 20,000 francs a-year he had thus secured to himself with as perfect and intense conviction as Baron Rothschild when, in his *bureaux* of the Rue Laffitte, he decides upon some way of doubling the capital just realised by a successful railroad. As we have taken occasion to remark, between the plan and its realisation there was, in Balzac's brain, no intermediate step; it was *realised* as soon as it was conceived; nor must this be lost sight of, for the peculiarities of his talent all belong immediately to this intense, this flesh-and-blood reality, which every idea that crosses his mind instantaneously assumes.

In Paris, what is termed "all the world" is familiar with the story of Balzac and Henri Monnier. The former had just promised to write a play (for the first time), in which Frederick had promised to perform (this was long before the adventure of *Vautrin*). Walking home from the meeting with the great actor, Balzac was counting up the proceeds of the affair; and had arrived at one hundred and odd thousand francs, when he met Henri Monnier, to whom he spoke of this new piece of good-luck as of a thing the advantages whereof he was already tranquilly enjoying. "Well, then," replied Henri Monnier, "as the operation is so far advanced, and is so infallible, just lend me a five-franc piece upon it."

In this instinctive faculty of simultaneous conception and embodiment lies, we say, the individuality of Balzac's talent when its creations are brought before the world; but he himself has a distinct private *reason* for creating. He creates his fancy's offspring, not that they may *live*,—they *do* live naturally, and, as it were, of themselves,—but that they may *calculate*; that they may make and lose their fortunes, get into difficulties and out of them; and that he, Balzac, may administer and dispose of, manipulate and register, their losses and their gains. Fix upon this arithmetical tendency as the secret of Balzac's psychological and intellectual unity, take hold of it as the guiding-line that you must never let slip, and it will bring you safely through the whole labyrinth of his inventions. This is the reason why, when night falls (for during the day he scarcely ever works), he sits down surrounded by a whole world of creatures perfectly and absolutely *real* to him, and devotes himself to looking into and "settling their affairs." Here is the secret of all the banking business of Nueingen and Du Tillet, of Lucien de Rubempré's entire career; and of the long struggle necessitated by that, in itself most excellent speculation, the vegetable writing-paper of Angoulême. Hence spring all the eternal law-suits, with their exact amount of costs cast up to a fraction, and the usurer's in-



tricate demands, and the fabulous lists of legal expenses incurred by protested bills, and the tables of the yet more fabulous profits resulting from operations that have been successful, and the thousand financial inspirations that, in the perusal of any work of Balzac's, make the reader sure beforehand of finding at least as many pages devoted to figures as to love-making. Watch with what delight he regulates the expenditure of a family, be it that of a poor *employé* in the provinces, or of a grand seigneur in Paris; with what intense vitality he plunges into his pecuniary poetics! And, when *la cousine Bette* has gone to live with Madame Marneffe, how he enjoys going to market with her and Mathurine, robbing Peter to pay Paul in fish, flesh, and fowl, and exulting over the thousand francs a month that he thus regularly saves for Mathurine, Madame Marneffe, and *la cousine Bette*. And when for the second time that very disreputable old gentleman, Lieutenant-General Hulot, has pledged his whole salary for three years in order to obtain half the sum in ready-money, how eagerly he watches till the time is expired, and counts up the several sources of revenue of the family.

Wholly unlike all other writers of fiction, who contrive to end their narratives leaving their heroes and heroines with the bloom of the ideal still upon them, Balzac goes on quite regardless of the romantic element, and only leaves off when his hero's or heroine's *affairs* are settled. Years pass unnoticed, and Henriette Hulot is becoming a fine motherly kind of woman, and even "*le beau Wenceslas de Steinbock*" must be a mature gentleman by this time (consequently *not* fulfilling the conditions which would ordinarily be required, were they purely artistic creations); but this troubles not Balzac, their affairs are settled—*voilà l'important*. With 100,000 francs recovered,—the Lord knows how,—and placed out at *such* interest! (and safely too), and with 3000 francs a-year from their uncle the marshal who is dead, and 1200 from *la cousine Bette*, and heaven knows how many more infinitesimally small resources, the Hulots make up 20 or 24,000 francs a-year, and Balzac is happy. *His* own personal affair of the dairy and the kitchen-garden and the Malaga wine has not precisely succeeded, but that is of no consequence; his friend Celestine Crével has, entirely through his means, and after no end of tribulations, made a "capital business" of that house of hers on the Boulevard des Italiens; and that quite satisfies him. The reader, from his very different point of view, objects, perhaps, that *his* interest is exhausted in all these people,—that he was touched by the misfortunes of young and fair women, and of ardent courageous men, but cannot consent to remain attached to a hero or heroine who has subsided into the plump unpoetical comforts of a "well-regulated" middle age;

but Balzac rubs his hands, and rejoices over the clever way in which they are brought out of their embarrassments. If the author of *Un Grand Homme de Province à Paris* had himself conceived the love-passage still alive in all our memories between Miss Ashton and the Master of Ravenswood, he would not have ended the recital without giving us the minutest information as to the division of the Ashton property; and Edgar himself he would have brought over to France, there to accumulate an unlimited fortune by the importation of whisky, or seal-skins, or Cairn Gorms.

*There is no poetry in Balzac*—to this his greatest admirers must make up their minds; and it is from this particular point of view that M. Gozlan's little volume is so full of interest and information. But now let it be noted that by this remark we do not mean to convey that Balzac *never* creates a poetical situation or character: this would not be correct; he does so sometimes, though not frequently; and when he does so, it is always by the exact reverse of the means employed by those in whom the poetic sense is naturally and strongly developed. The latter arrive at reality through the poetry inherent in themselves, they *divine* what really is; and (if we may be permitted a pedantic expression) they reverse the Platonic theory, and prove the finite by the infinite. Not so Balzac; whatever poetry is visible here and there in his works (as, for instance, in the *Recherche de l'Absolu*, or the *Lys dans la Vallée*—we purposely do not mention *Eugénie Grandet*, because that *chef-d'œuvre* is purely pathetic, *not* poetical, and derives all its pathos from the intensity of its prosaic reality),—whatever poetry, we say, is visible here and there in Balzac's works, results from the reality, from the absolute *palpability* of the situations and the personages, but not from the inspiration of their author. Poetry with Balzac is an effect, not a cause; he himself neither likes, nor even is able to appreciate it; and they, perhaps, among his most intimate friends, are right who assert that, could Balzac have been placed at the head of some colossal counting-house, where the fortunes of all Paris were to be regulated and administered by him, he would never have dreamt of writing a book in all his life, because the instinct within him would have found its satisfaction, and production have corresponded to conception in an immediate and natural way. "Nothing in Balzac's whole organisation," says Léon Gozlan, "tended in the least degree towards poetry. He would pretend every now and then to admire the *Orientales* of Victor Hugo, or Lamartine's *Méditations*; but his pretended admiration hit this and that passage by chance, as a raw sportsman fires at random into the midst of a whole covey of birds, knocking over to right and to left such game as his aimless shots

may happen to strike." One evening Gozlan, who, in his small way, has a certain poetical tendency, puts his friend Balzac to the test by carrying him off to the Théâtre-Français to see the *Burgraves* of Hugo, one of the last pieces which set the Philistines and the enthusiasts by the ears (neither being wholly wrong or right, inasmuch as—though quite absurd as a tragedy—the *Burgraves* contains fine touches of poetry). The Philistines grinned and giggled; and Gozlan, turning round to Balzac, who was behind him, caught him, in the midst of one of the really fine passages, in the act of grinning like the veriest *bourgeois* of them all. "How do you like it?" asked he of Gozlan. "I?" repeated the latter, exaggerating his admiration, "I hold it to be sublime; since Dante nothing equal to it has been written." "That is precisely my opinion," rejoined Balzac, converted to sudden gravity, and to a creed which was ever after his, and which consisted in the declaration that "since Dante nothing so fine as the *Burgraves* had been produced."

With this strange absence of the poetic sense, it is consistent enough that there was also in Balzac's intellectual organisation no proper ideality at all. "He no better understood very splendid prose than he did verse," says Léon Gozlan; "all art with him was of one peculiar kind. He preferred to the grand style of the masters of the French language that minute and laboured prose in which he himself excelled; true also, undoubtedly, in its way, as is each microscopic particle of diamond-dust, but not true with the luminous and all-powerful *oneness* of the diamond itself. He was prepared in public to carry to any height his expressions of admiration for the glories of the Florentine or Venetian school; would rave about Leonardo, or Raphael, or Titian, with any one or every one; but he well convinced that, had he been able to compose a cabinet of pictures for his own private delight, he would have purchased Mieris, Teniers, and Ostades, and those alone."

And this brings us immediately to the question of art in Balzac's own works. We have seen what was with him the chief *cause* of creation; we must now examine what was its *mode*. We find here as strong a dose of realism as in all the rest. We know *why* his so thickly-peopled world exists; it remains now to see *how* it exists, what is the manner in which he compels that which he produces to impress the reader? His *method* is almost exclusively a descriptive, rarely an active one. For this reason he must see and know, since he invariably copies, and does not imagine. His conceptions all spring from his external experiences; they depend in no way upon what surpasses sensible evidence. He can never, in his own opinion, describe them too minutely, never sufficiently prove to himself how acute are his

faculties of observation. One day, after launching forth in praise of some new novel of Cooper's, where the American author had treated of Lake Ontario (Balzac being for the moment persuaded of the superiority of *exact* landscape-painting over every other branch of the descriptive art): "Well, then," said Gozlan to him, smiling, "if it *is* so fine, why don't you at once place the scene of a novel on the borders of a lake?"—"And where the d—l am I to find the lake?" was the immediate reply; "do you suppose that wash-hand basin, the lake of Enghien, will do?" "You know so many men who have travelled all over the world; get them to tell you what they know."—"Pshaw!" was Balzac's answer; "they know nothing,—nobody knows any thing; I can give you terrible proof of that." And hereupon follows a speech which we cannot refrain from extracting entire, because it sets forth all Balzac's *method*, and delivers to us the secret of his art:

"When I was about commencing the *Lys dans la Vallée*, my idea was to give up a vast portion to the landscape. I plunged forthwith into Pantheism like a Pagan. I turned myself into trees, rivers, stars, fountains, effects of sunlight, &c. ! But I wanted to know the names of every thing, and the nature of the smallest plants, with the description of which I intended to adorn my tale. I first applied to my gardener, to find out all about the various kinds of grass that grow every where; on road-sides, and in common fields, and solitary streets, and every where in short. 'Nothing easier,' cries he; 'here is clover and vetch, and' . . . . 'Nay, nay,' said I; 'that is not what I want; I want the technical names of all these thousands of low, short, small, green blades that we are eternally walking upon.' And, snatching up a handful from the turf, 'There,' said I, 'that, what is all that?' 'O, that,' was the answer, with somewhat of disdain; 'that is only grass.' 'Well,' I persisted; 'but the names of all these so differently shaped blades—long, or short, or straight, or curved, or soft, or rough, or hard, or dry, or damp, or downy, some dank and dark, others of a tender pale hue,—what are the names of these?' But it was all no use. He would go on saying they were *grass*, and nothing else for the life of me could I ever get out of him. The next day a friend came to see me,—precisely one of your travelled men, who had been 'all over the world!' I applied to him as I had done to my gardener. He did not hesitate; he knew all about every thing; so when I put my handful of grass into his hands, I felt certain I was going to be enlightened. No such thing. This personage was only conversant with the *Flora* and *Fauna* of Malabar. 'If we were but in the Indian hemisphere!' exclaimed he; and I was as wise as before. Next day I rushed off to the Jardin des Plantes, and simply addressed myself to one of the most celebrated professors there. 'O, my dear M. de Balzac,' was his remark, 'we study here countless interesting plants; but our life would not be long enough if we were to condescend to all those miserable little blades of grass; but,' he added, 'without joking, where is your new novel

placed? 'In Touraine.'—'Well, then, the first peasant in the province itself will tell you more than any professor here can do.' Upon which, if you please, I started for Touraine; where I found the peasants as ignorant as my traveller, as ignorant as my gardener, but not a whit more ignorant than the professors of the Jardin des Plantes. So that, after all, when I came to write the *Lys dans la Vallée*, I found it impossible to describe with any thing like accuracy those plots of verdure that it would have been my delight to paint blade by blade, with the patience and rich colouring of the Dutch. And after that, here you come advising me to rely upon other people for the materials wherewith to paint lakes like Cooper's—*lakes that he has seen and that he knows!*"

Here is all Balzac's theory of art, here is his *method*; and we were right in saying that the man, whole and entire (and therefore the author), is revealed to us by two passages in M. Gozlan's book,—in the one we have just quoted, and the one with which we commenced this article.

Balzac, as we have remarked, is distinguished amongst nearly all modern French writers of fiction by his total want of scepticism,—scepticism, we mean, as we explained before, in a moral and intellectual point of view. Scepticism applied to religion is merely one particular form of doubt, or rather one of its particular and individual applications. The sort of scepticism for which the men of *la jeune France* (and Balzac belongs essentially to these) are remarkable, is a disbelief less even in religious dogmas than in moral, social, and political doctrines. Some of them may (nay do) believe in God; none of them believe in man. The want of conviction shows itself especially, we should say, in practical undertakings. These men neither believe in what they do, nor even in what they are. No one "acts up to himself," or indeed takes the trouble of establishing in his own mind a "self" to act up to. Nothing is treated seriously, because nothing is in fact believed to be; and the opinion entertained by so many French thinkers, that *Robert Macaire* is the truest emblem of the state of society in *la jeune France*, is in reality but too well founded. In the way of art (unless in some few exceptional cases, with which it is not our present purpose to deal), disbelief is absolute; and no creator (or none of those who go by the name) believes for an instant in what he has created. "You have entirely misrepresented A. B. in the first chapter of your book," said a really learned and earnest-minded man to one of the most illustrious writers in France, who had just published a work upon the Revolution of '89. "Maybe," was the answer; "but twenty pages further you will find I have just reversed the judgment of which you complain; one or the other statement must be true, but I am not sure which!" This sentence fully depicts *Young France*.

Now nothing can be more repugnant to Balzac's nature than this practical and every-day application of the sceptical tendency. He is fanatical in his belief in himself and in all he does. Every action of his life is marked by earnestness of conviction; he has inflexible faith in himself. He is perfectly confident that he has discovered, some where near Sèvres, the identical spot which Saint-Simon designates by the name of *Les Jardies*; he would go and live elsewhere than in that sunburnt, sand-strewn, parrot's-perch of an abode, with its garden wherein people can only walk about by resting on their heels, and poking pebbles under their toes, to prevent themselves rolling down-hill, if he did not infallibly *know* the place to be (what it *never was* in reality) the haunt of half the court of Louis XIV. Watch him over his "yellow tea," which he gets, heaven knows how! from Peking, and reveres and believes in as a Hindoo believes in Brahma. See how he makes pilgrimages to the distant shrines of famous coffee-vendors, in whose hands *alone* is deposited the incomparable mocha, which forms the chief article of his consumption. Compare Balzac with his brethren of *La Bohème*, and mark the difference. They, the impious scoffers,—they deny every thing—*Les Jardies*, and Saint-Simon, and Louis XIV. himself; they don't believe in "yellow tea" from Peking, or even in Peking, or in China itself; they dispute the existence of *the mocha*, hold it for a burnt *haricot*; won't believe that the Grand Turk drinks it; nor, indeed, that there ever was a Grand Turk. Balzac, on the contrary, in the midst of all these infidels, is perpetually yearning for fresh objects whereon to fasten his large faculty of faith. Just study him one morning after a certain supper at *Les Jardies*, where all the guests had got terribly drunk. A Russian prince, under the influence of some potent Rhine wine, had been eloquent upon the subject of one of his intimate friends, who was condemned to work in the mines of Siberia for some political transgression. By degrees, as the wine softened the hearts of the company, they had all wept bitterly over the fate of the wretched exile, who, with each glass, sank deeper into the bowels of the earth, and might have reached its centre by midnight, if his mourners had not gone down one after the other under the table, and thus stopped his further progress. Study Balzac, we say, next morning, when, with blank countenance, he announces that the individual whom they had all bewailed never really existed. "He actually never *had* a friend who worked in the mines of Siberia," exclaimed Balzac, alluding to the Russian, who was gone. "Nor any one else either, I dare say," yawned one of those present. "I dare say there *are* no mines in Siberia," added another. "And I dare say there is no *Siberia*," concluded a third. But Balzac shook his head disappointed, and mumbling "he assured *me*

himself it was all a fiction," he showed by his whole manner the difficulty and the regret with which he brought himself to admit that that which had impressed him so strongly could be untrue.

A pretty chance of success any one would have had with Balzac who should have tried to make him (for any reason whatever) modify any of his creations. Modify, indeed! How *could* he do so? He would have simply told you his creations "were what they were" (even as we have said he himself "*was what he was*"), and "could be no other than themselves." Amongst a thousand proofs of this strong faith of Balzac's in the real existence of his brain-progeny, we will take the following. He is met one morning, by appointment, by Léon Gozlan, to whom he had written to say he had an important service to ask of him. Balzac is, by the way, in a very bad humour, because he has just come from paying a visit to Madame de Girardin, whose Ionic-pillared stone-built habitation of the Rue de Chaillot he had found disagreeably damp and cold.\* "The idea," growls he, "of any one presuming to inhabit a temple who is not a god!" But what is the "service" he has to ask of his friend? We shall see. He is busied through the medium of the *Revue de Paris* in bringing to the knowledge of the public an individual with whom *he* has been in familiar intercourse for the last six months, but of whose history he has not yet been able to write a line, for the simple reason that the said individual has *no name*. "He gave me all the minutest details of the personage's life and career," says Gozlan; and he adds that the "service" was merely to help him in finding out the said personage's name. "A name," cried Balzac, "that cannot possibly fit any one else; but that will fit *him*, as the gum fits the tooth, as the nail fits the flesh—that is in short *his name*." Gozlan, in spite of his long habits of intimacy with Balzac, which teach him how useless it is to dispute with him upon any of his convictions, does nevertheless try to discuss the point, and goes so far as to offer his co-operation in the work of *making* a name, of *inventing* one. Balzac starts back. "Make a name!" he echoes contemptuously; "people can no more make names than they can make granite, or marble, or carbon. A name *is*; and the man and his name are one." "Well, then," sighed Gozlan, "if that is the case, we have but one resource, namely, to *find* it, if it exists." "*It does exist*," replies Balzac, with triumphant conviction; but he avows at the same time that he has passed six months in the daily study of the *Almanach Royal* without dis-

\* In the year 1844, M. de Girardin bought a stone pavilion at the entrance of the Champs Elysées and Rue de Chaillot, which (small as it is), with its columns and flat roofs, looks like nothing so much as a temple.

covering it. Upon this, Gozlan proposes to perambulate all Paris, reading the names on the shop-fronts and sign-boards. The two start on their journey, reading to right and to left, and fruitlessly; and they go on spelling through the whole town in all imaginable directions. At last, near night-fall, in an obscure narrow street in the neighbourhood of the *Grand' Poste*, Balzac found what he sought:

"I shall not forget it in a hurry," remarks the narrator. "Balzac changed colour, his arm quivered in mine, and for the moment he was possessed by a strong emotion. 'There it is,' he cried, 'there!' No doubt was possible; he had in his mind *really discovered* what he had been pursuing. I looked up, and read '*Marcas*' over a low narrow door opening into a dark alley. '*Marcas!*' exclaimed he, looking into me with his flaming eyes; 'there it is! *it is his name!*' and he had perfect unshakable faith that it was so."

Balzac, as we have already noticed, lived *with* his own creations far more than he lived in the outward world, or even in the world of intellect. He read few books, went to few plays, and found his resources in himself. The night was his day, and surrounded him with what were his *realities*. For any ordinary human being such a life would have been, as Gozlan says, "the life of a galley-slave, full of efforts against nature;" but it was the life that *alone* could suit the peculiar nature of Balzac, because it alone favoured his complete isolation in his own self-created universe.

"No one," says his biographer, "ever lived so much in the night as Balzac. Often, as he has confessed to me, he has found himself in his dressing-gown and slippers at early dawn on the Place du Carrousel, having walked all night through woods, plains, villages, and fields, till he reached the town. In such cases he used to climb up upon the outside of the Versailles coach, and return home by Sèvres, forgetting only to pay the driver, for the plain reason that he had left the *Jardies* without a farthing in his pocket."

This trifling circumstance, it seems, never astonished any of the parties concerned; for the coachmen along the road were well used to Balzac and to his eccentricities, and they knew their fare was safe, though not at the moment it was due.

We should probably not a little surprise some of our readers if we were to tell them that Balzac was one of the writers of modern France who made *least* money. "It is with sorrow and regret that we have to admit—but we *must* admit—that Balzac did by no means gain by his writings the sums that were supposed." This is the deliberate statement of M. Gozlan; and on this point, at least, no one could be better informed. Balzac only began to "make money," as it is called, towards the close of his career. His earlier years were obstinately laborious, but their employ-



ment was not lucrative. The great source of riches to the writers of fiction in France, the *feuilleton*, attained its extreme point of development but three or four years before Balzac's death, with Eugène Sue's *Mystères de Paris* and the *Monte Christo* of Dumas. Upon this, too, there was a drawback with Balzac. It was always stipulated that he should defray his own expenses of correction; and what these amounted to, they only can tell who were the witnesses of the process. "Babylonian corrections," exclaims Léon Gozlan, "*frais Cyclopiens*;" and so they were: and in fact, however well paid originally, Balzac's publications in the columns of the newspaper-press dwindled down through his mania as much as a good half or even three-quarters. "Where public report speaks of 30,000 francs, we should read 3,000," observes M. Gozlan; and he adds: "one with another, and all things counted up, it is impossible that during his luckiest years even, Balzac should ever have realised more than an average of 12,000 francs a twelvemonth." This, as we see, bears but a small ratio to the *eighteen hundred thousand francs* gained by M. de Lamartine between 1847 and 1855, or to the *two millions and more* produced by the various works of M. Alexandre Dumas, which that prolific author has found means of squandering as rapidly as he realised. But Balzac could not resign himself to the idea that the public should believe he gained *less* than any one else; and by dint of reflection, he coolly invented a means of equalising matters. This means was no other than the supposition of his debts; debts of which he was for ever talking; which he pretended harassed his very life out; which were the canker of his peace; and which were in fact as much one of his inventions as any personage in his books. "Unable to make a noise about his horses, carriages, hotels, and the rest," says M. Gozlan, "he determined to make a noise about his debts, which became the representatives of the fortune *he did not gain*." He succeeded; for he soon believed in the debts, as in every thing else; and the debts became proverbial, and were only doubted by the intimates who had found out the secret. The public was entirely taken in; and when any one observed, that "for the enormous sums of money he gained, M. de Balzac did not cut any great figure in the world," there was always a voice ready to utter, with deep conviction, the constantly repeated phrase: "A mint of money! well and good; but only consider *his debts!*"

Now Balzac was *not* carried away by any expensive tastes; his motives for writing were therefore not those of any of his colleagues in literature. He did not, like them, write to secure *other* enjoyments through writing, but to secure the actual enjoyment of the writing itself; to impart to the public what he

knew, and to describe what was perpetually going on around him. He had all within himself; his joys were purely internal in fact, and dependent upon the development of his faculties alone. What did Balzac want with sumptuous hotels and gorgeous palaces? Go into the bare chambers of *Les Jardies*, and mark what was their aspect whilst he inhabited them. Upon the naked walls of each unfurnished room are characters in charcoal written in his hand, and meant to show what were his future decorative plans. Upon what Gozlan calls "the patient stucco of the walls," were scrawled such indications as these: "Here a coating of Parian marble." "Here wainscoting of cedar-wood." On the whitewash overhead was announced the expectation of "a ceiling by Eugène Delacroix;" whilst on uncovered floors might be read, "Here an Aubusson carpet." The unfinished cavities of fireplaces bore inscriptions of gorgeous marble chimney-pieces to come; round empty entrances were labelled, "Here must be doors after the model of Trianon." And in one *salon* you walked on the calligraphic assurance of a "*parquet mosaïque* composed of all the rarest woods in the world." The exceeding comicality of all this so struck Léon Gozlan, that he, too, one day snatched up a piece of charcoal, and, in larger characters than any, upon a wall as vacant as the rest in Balzac's own room, wrote, "Here a painting of Raphael's beyond price, and such as the world has never yet seen!" But all this *satisfied* Balzac—he *possessed these riches*, as he administered the dairy, and the *potager*, and the Malaga vineyards we are acquainted with. "Balzac," says his chronicler, "was an incarnation of prudence and economy, and had, early in life, put his own affairs in order." He had begun his Parisian career by the establishment of a printing-office, which had caused him some embarrassment at the time, but from which he had withdrawn with his well-known honesty in pecuniary matters. This constituted one of the pretences he used to put forward to excuse his want of money, when "it was notorious that he was *making such enormous sums*." That printing-office had been "a cause of ruin," he would say, "of ruin irretrievable—eternal." He perhaps believed it himself; but whenever he broached the subject before his intimates, they were in the habit of looking significantly at each other, and when they were quite alone, of whispering, "here we are, *in* for the *deficit Kessner* again." The *deficit Kessner* was an allusion to the fabulous sums Balzac had hypothetically lost by an individual of the name of Kessner, who had been associated with him in the fatal printing-office. Still, as it was necessary to "keep up appearances" with regard to his debts, some creditors were artfully chosen by the ingenious owner of *Les Jardies* as being likely to make most noise about their

bills; and to these "picked" duns he committed the care of his reputation. Half a dozen such filled the adjacent *communes* of Sèvres and Ville d'Avray with the echoes of their loud attempts to force an entrance into our author's dwelling; and their lamentations on the bootlessness of the undertaking were so lively, that no one dreamed of asking what might be the amount of the sums thus clamoured for—usually a few hundred francs.

In a small way, nevertheless, Balzac had certain embarrassments; arising more from his eccentricities, however, than from absolute deficiency of money. He was constantly in hot-water with his neighbours, and had become the perpetual butt for the "*papier timbré*" of a dozen tribunals, from the very nature of the singular property he had persisted in buying. As we have said, *Les Jardies* consisted of a house built after his own plans, and perched upon the top of a hill so steep, that the alleys of what the owner was pleased to term his "garden" realised but too perfectly the ideal of a *facilis descensus*, and were literally only practicable to such persons as had mastered the process of steadying themselves by artificial means. Round this strange pyramidal *pleasaunce* Balzac must needs go and build up a wall, which of course was for ever being carried away by storms of wind or rain, to which it could not oppose any sufficient resistance, and spreading itself out full-length amongst his neighbours' carrots and turnips. Who shall say how many times the wall went trespassing, and was reconstructed, and took to its wonted ways again? At last Balzac bethought him of buying the bit of land on the other side, and rebuilt his wall (never reflecting that it was now no longer needed), quaintly remarking that "it cost dear, but that it was a comfort to be able to tumble to pieces on your own ground," and that "his wretched wall could now die in its own bed." What Balzac would have done with enormous sums of money, had he ever gained them, is not a problem that his most intimate friends have been able to solve; yet that he *did* yield to the vague but perpetual attraction of the philosopher's stone to the full as much (*and in the same way*) as the alchemists of the middle ages, is a fact not to be denied. At one time this is represented by Mahomet's ring, which Balzac firmly believes has fallen into his possession, and with which he is for instantly setting forth, with three of his friends, to the court of the Great Mogul, who is to give him fifteen or twenty millions for the sacred gem. At another time it takes the form of an infallible treasure to be brought to light by a finding-rod, which gold, no matter where or how deeply hidden, irresistibly attracts, and by the help whereof Balzac is persuaded he shall discover at St. Domingo the vast sums Toussaint L'Ouverture had concealed; for that he did conceal them, Balzac positively knows.

There would be no end if we were to enumerate all the hallucinations of Balzac's brain on this subject. The nearest approach to any thing practical was his sudden notion of writing for the theatre; a resolution never suited to his talent, but adopted suddenly one fine day, *de parti pris*, as the French say. Victor Hugo had gone to pay a visit to Balzac, and breakfast with him at *Les Jardies*. The two were very slightly acquainted with each other. Before an hour was over, what was inevitable had occurred. Balzac, who, as we have said, was utterly divested of any thing in the shape of affectation, had become the gaping, devouring auditor of Victor Hugo. The latter speedily indulged himself in his usual practice of *holding forth*, and was far too pompous and affected *not* to seize hold of his host by every fibre of his pre-eminently gullible nature. Hugo expatiated on the facility of making a fortune by the drama, to which Balzac had never dreamt of turning his thoughts:

"Hugo," says Léon Gozlan, who was present, "appeared to Balzac's dazzled vision as an enchanter, who caused diamond mines to open beneath his feet. He explained to him the real meaning of the words *droits d'auteur*, of which the sense to his listener's ears had till then been obscure and incomplete. Gains achieved in Paris! Gains achieved in the provinces! Here for three acts, there for five; and then 'revivals,' and premiums, and sale of tickets, and a host of small benefits besides. Often four hundred francs in a night! and all that—all that silver and gold—all these five-franc pièces and Napoleons—to be gained while the author is sleeping, or walking about with his hands in his pockets! After his first effort of creation, the metallic shower pours down upon him while he sits quiet doing nothing."

This, we may easily believe (having once the key to the man's character) tempted Balzac in the light of a financial operation, *une affaire*. "I am certain," says his biographer, "that these details, given him by Hugo with the precision of a clerk of the court of accounts, were the main cause of the rage for dramatic authorship which seized upon Balzac, and never left him from that hour to the hour of his death." This, indeed, is the only possible explanation of the sudden mania for the stage which afflicted the author of *Eugénie Grandet* in the latter period of his career. Never was any writer of fiction, perhaps, so totally deficient in the species of talent required for animating the characters of a drama. As we have so often, in the course of these pages, observed, Balzac's *mode* of creation was purely descriptive; he wrote merely to *describe*, to bring to the knowledge of others what he knew himself; and if he could have found any better and surer means than writing for making the public familiar with what to him were realities, he would have instantly adopted that means. This point granted (and we do not believe any one has

ever dreamt of disputing it), it becomes evident that Balzac's genius was the very reverse of dramatic, since the *active*, as distinguished from the *descriptive* mode of invention, is essentially requisite for the drama.

Of this Balzac had, we suspect, some glimmering notion himself; for no sooner had he decided that "the thing to be done" was to write plays, than he at once, and in the most methodical way, set about discovering a *collaborateur*, who was to furnish subject, plot, and incidents, whilst Balzac undertook to supply the dialogue. His choice fell upon an unhappy young man of the name of Lassailly, who some few years later died in a mad-house; and assuredly there would be nothing strange if a disposition to insanity had been fostered by his abode at *Les Jardies* in the "lion's den," as his more independent comrades denominated Balzac's residence. The tortures which our author contrived to inflict on his literary coadjutor were, as usual, fore-ordained by Balzac in a very specific and minute preliminary adjustment of their mutual relations. A man of some note, who is but just dead, and who used to be called the Napoleon of the press, —the originator of the *Siècle*, the *Droit*, the *Liberté*, the *Charivari*, and a dozen other journals, Armand Dutacq, gave very striking testimony to Balzac's genius for this kind of transaction. We may get some conception of the warmth of this man's admiration for Balzac, when we know that to the hour of his death he professed to feel only two absorbing aspirations—the one to originate a paper in comparison with which the *Times* should seem but a penny print, the other to edit a really complete edition of Balzac's works. Yet this person once confessed that he had never read *one line* of Balzac's publications; "but," he used to add, "I have read, and I possess in autograph, every agreement, every *traité* he ever drew up with his publishers; and these are master-pieces of genius." Of course Balzac, who would willingly have drawn up written contracts with his butcher and baker, did not let slip so good an opportunity of *verbalising* his intentions as was here offered. He framed a *traité* with Lassailly, in virtue of which the latter was to be lodged, fed, and in every respect cared for; while he, in his turn, was to construct skeletons of plays for Balzac to dress up and animate. Poor Lassailly, who shall paint the tortures he underwent? In the dead of the night, either a bell that would have awakened the Seven Sleepers scared his dreams, or Balzac in person, lamp in hand, wrapped in his monk-like dressing-gown, stood over him, glowering into his very soul with his intensely-luminous eyes, and calling to him like the voice of inexorable fate, "*What have you found, Lassailly?*" As might be expected, Lassailly never "found" any thing. As to Balzac, he did not trouble himself to seek; that was not *his*

business; he had awarded to himself another *kind* of activity in the partnership, and he looked upon his miserable partner as bound to execute the work for which he was engaged—an obligation which he never did or could discharge. Night after night the same colloquy took place. "I saw Frederick to-day; he is hungry and thirsty for a drama that shall make all Paris rave; but *where* is this drama that shall make all Paris rave? *Voilà!*" And "*Voilà!*" would echo the unhappy object of the demand, trying to look wise. "Have you got that drama, Lassailly?" "Not quite," would be the reply. "Then you have it in part?" would rejoin the inflexible tormentor. "Why . . . you see, I wish you would give me a notion of what *you* think. . . . I am sure if we were to put our ideas together—" "*Our* ideas!" Balzac would repeat, indignantly. "It is not my *business* to have any. You are half-asleep, Lassailly" (of course he was, poor wretch); "take some rest, if that is necessary for your imagination; I will come again in an hour, or else ring."

The end of the association was, that Lassailly ran away, and never heard the name of the *Jardies* without a thrill of terror; and Balzac took upon himself the hopeless task of writing for the theatre *de parti pris*; in which province of art, so entirely unsuited to his peculiar genius, his repeated failures are only too well known. The only part of Balzac's talent that could in any degree be applied to the drama was the mechanical part. It is in the list of his characters (take, for instance, either *Quinola* or *Vautrin*) that you find the only trace of his individuality. When these characters have to *act*, to *be*, they fail in their purpose, are all at fault, and cease to inspire any interest in the public. But in his *dramatis personæ* you find, to borrow Léon Gozlan's words, "breathing the same air, occupying the same ground, a motley crowd of dukes and duchesses, swindlers and lacqueys, who seem destined never to be jostled together, and in whose strange juxtaposition lay precisely Balzac's *idée fixe*." This is quite true; and here, too, lay the secret of the superiority of his works, so long as those works were produced by the merely descriptive method. The whole of that long series of volumes which form *La Comédie Humaine*, draw their existence from, and owe their worth to, the prevalence of the tragi-comical element. To describe this tragi-comedy, the presence whereof was manifest to his sense on every side, *externally and palpably*, Balzac's genius was sufficient; to have put all this vast tragi-comedy in action; to have *reproduced* this world from within; to have made it *live without describing it*,—for this only a Shakespeare could have sufficed. To this height Balzac not only never rose, but he never put his foot upon the first round of the ladder that leads to such an eminence. What we have said will, we think,

show that society exercised a far greater influence upon Balzac than Balzac exercised upon society. His was an essentially absorbent nature, and by no means one of those which of themselves, and from themselves, give forth what entire generations are to absorb. If this is in one sense the cause of the limitation of his talent, it is also the cause of its intensity; and what at first sight may seem to diminish his power as a writer, is found upon maturer examination to be the mainspring of that power.

Balzac's works have been imperfectly named; instead of being entitled *La Comédie Humaine*, they should have been called *La Comédie Humaine en France*, for they do not at all depict the comedy in which men and women are actors all over the world, but only and *exclusively* the comedy that human nature enacts *in France*. No hero or heroine of Balzac's could be other than a Frenchman or a Frenchwoman; no scene of any one of his books could take place in any other country. Nay, more than this, his creations live only in his own age. Balzac does not, to use Pascal's fine expression, "wander in times that are not his own;" on the contrary, he keeps within all the realities that compass him round. That very tendency we have pointed out, to be eternally "settling" somebody's affairs; that rage for figures; that strong instinct for "administration,"—are the special characteristics, as they are one of the incoherencies, of the most unpunctual, most unbusiness-like nation upon earth. Balzac's principal originality in France lies, as we have said, in his sincerity, in his want of affectation. The race of authors *generally*, amongst our neighbours, is a race in which the author predominates over the man, and in which consequently the national characteristics are soon lost in those of the corporation, if we may so call it. With Balzac, the man predominating completely over the author, the marks of nationality have never been effaced. It has been often said, that the writer of the *Comédie Humaine* descended from Rabelais in a literary sense, and had great affinity with Molière; but such an assertion evidently needs qualification. The conceptions of both Rabelais and Molière embrace mankind, typify *all* men; whereas Balzac's conceptions typify *Frenchmen only*. Where is the land to which *Panurge* cannot belong? and of what country may not *Alceste* or *Tartuffe* be natives? But can this be said of any of Balzac's creations? can they find the vital conditions they require any where out of the atmosphere of French civilisation? If we had not already too much enlarged upon our subject, it would not be difficult to show where really lie Balzac's literary affinities, from whom he derives them, and who derives them from him. A writer very little read in this country, not perhaps *generally* known even in his own, but enthusiastically admired by those

who have studied him narrowly, Henri Beyle (Stendhal), is probably, to a certain extent, one of the determining causes of Balzac's literary career, and of some of the peculiarities of his talent. We say this reservedly, because Balzac would have been Balzac had Stendhal never existed; but Stendhal, perhaps, helped him to be himself a little sooner. The analogies and dissimilarities too between the two men are as great as between the two authors; but neither has any analogy with any one else, save the other alone. Stendhal's individuality is not Balzac's, but it is almost *as strong* as his, and that is where they are of the same kind; Stendhal is undoubtedly Balzac's *precursor*, he heralds and announces, though he is not exactly *like* him. Many of the peculiarities of *La Comédie Humaine* (take the *Conjuration des Treize*, for instance) may be traced back to that strange book, *Le Rouge et le Noir*; and the *Physiologie du Mariage* owes as much to Stendhal's *Traité de l'Amour* as to Brillat Savarin's *Physiologie du Goût*. But there is one immense difference between them—Stendhal has no conviction. When, in the *Chartreuse de Parme*, he gives us that wonderful description of the battle of Waterloo, as he himself *lived through* it, he neither believes in himself nor in the battle of Waterloo. Had Balzac written it, he would have believed in every line he wrote; as he would, if he were still alive, believe in the genuineness of the sixty-million-and-tenth sabre-hilt that might be dug up on the immortal plain itself, and offered to him as that of the first horseman of the *Vieille Garde* who fled. This being premised, let it be remarked parenthetically, that as a mere work of art (but as such alone) the *Chartreuse de Parme* is infinitely superior to any thing Balzac ever wrote; a truth of which no one was more intimately persuaded than Balzac himself.

If we had to point out in whom this quality of conviction (so rare amongst French writers of fiction) is exhibited at the present time, we could point only to the name of the younger Alexandre Dumas. Out of Balzac's large and varied intellectual estate, young Dumas (and he is the only one) has inherited this faculty of belief; and it is to that alone that he owes the honour of being singled out for notice from amidst the insignificant tribe of his contemporaries by two of the best (and one of them the severest) critics in Europe—Gutzkow and Gustave Planche. Alexandre Dumas *filis* is full of belief, as was Balzac; but, "alas," as Gutzkow justly laments, "belief in what? in whom?" In that alone which in the intellectual and moral world *is unhealthy*. He inherits also strikingly one of Balzac's most striking faults—a tendency to surrender himself completely to the impression of outward objects. Here Stendhal is likewise superior to both. The latter renders to himself a cooler account of his impression



and instead of obeying them always, puts them aside, banishes them, until they obey him; he then *recalls* them, and reproduces them at a distance. Balzac and his disciple, young Dumas, both commit the fault of registering immediately the impression they have not yet mastered; and the first evil result of this is the distorted proportion it induces—the violation of perspective, so to say.

But we feel we have already transgressed our limits; and we hasten to retrace our steps, and recur for the last time to what has occasioned, if it does not excuse, our prolixity. We have been drawn on to what our readers may consider, perhaps, too great a length by the exceeding importance we cannot avoid attaching to Balzac as an exponent of the true state of civilisation in modern France. And, in this sense, he fully justifies our remark, that his worth is, in reality, dependent precisely upon that one peculiarity, which at first sight seems to diminish it—his intense, but exclusive, nationality. Balzac is, perhaps, the one writer of modern France most read by us, and least understood; and he is so for the reason that he is so exclusively French. He is for France what Dickens and Thackeray both are for England. No class escapes him, and no characteristic of that class passes unnoticed. We have studied the *man* minutely, because, as we said, in the man is to be found the mainspring of the author, his *raison d'être*; and we measure the importance of the author by the deep insight he affords us into the social life of his country. Any one may know France without reading Balzac, but no one can read Balzac without knowing France.

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#### ART. IV.—MR. SPURGEON AND HIS POPULARITY.

*The New Park-Street Pulpit*, containing Sermons preached and revised by the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, Minister of the Chapel, during the year 1855. Vol. I. London: Alabaster and Passmore. 1856.

THE unhappy catastrophe which brought Mr. Spurgeon's name so prominently before the public a couple of months ago, has exposed him not unnaturally to a great deal of unpopularity. The propensity to find fault with a popular man, especially if he is a popular preacher, has given his critics plenty of business. Nothing, of course, is more easy and obvious than to say that it is an offence against good manners, and almost against the police themselves, to collect together large crowds of people to listen to irreverent familiarity, low buffoonery, and coarse railing upon

sacred subjects; nor does it require any great profundity or charity to suggest that Mr. Spurgeon is a mere impostor, a wretched hypocrite, who uses the Surrey Gardens for exactly the same purposes on Sunday for which other speculators on the public appetite for excitement employ them on the other days of the week. To us such criticism appears to be open to the double objection that it attacks a man who is placed by circumstances in a very painful position, and that it is a singularly feeble and inadequate solution of one of the most interesting of all possible problems. Ordinary candour must enable every one to see that the accident which occurred at the Surrey Gardens might have occurred to any body else as well as to Mr. Spurgeon, and that no one is to blame except those who caused the confusion. The question why several thousand people came together to listen to Mr. Spurgeon still remains to be answered; and we can scarcely conceive a question of greater interest to those who really wish to find the way to the hearts and understandings of large masses of their fellow-creatures. A young man of ordinary education, and without advantages of position or connection, has something to say which many thousand people weekly flock to hear. The question how and why this happens is surely one which cannot but be interesting to those who have had much experience of the utter failure of so large a number of the members of Mr. Spurgeon's profession to interest their congregations upon any subject whatever.

The most obvious answer to the question is no doubt to be found in Mr. Spurgeon's style. Any one, it is said, who will condescend to be a buffoon can collect an audience. Mr. Spurgeon's comic sermons and Mr. Robson's comic songs are popular for the same reason, though the one exhibition is in its proper place and the other is not. Many stories, more or less comic and more or less true, are very generally quoted in illustration of this opinion; but after carefully reading the thick and closely printed volume of sermons mentioned at the head of this article, we can conscientiously say that such stories do their subject considerable injustice. Coarseness, vulgarity, and sometimes even rant, is no doubt to be found in them in abundance; but they are by no means of the essence of Mr. Spurgeon's style, and might, we think, be expunged without affecting its force.

For example, in comparing the sufferings of the Christian with those of our Lord, we find (p. 13): "All you have to bear is as nothing compared with his mighty sufferings. Take courage; *face it again like a man; never say die.* Let not your patience be gone; take up your cross daily," &c. The introduction of the language of the ring in such a connection shows a want both of education and sensibility; but it is the phr

that is vulgar and not the thought. Mr. Spurgeon's own account of the matter seems to us to be a very fair explanation of it. He says in his preface, "There are also many expressions which may provoke a smile; but let it be remembered that every man has his moments when his lighter feelings indulge themselves, and the preacher must be allowed to have the same passions as his fellow-men; and since he lives in the pulpit more than any where else, it is but natural that his whole man should be there developed; besides, he is not quite sure about a smile being a sin, and at any rate he thinks it less a crime to cause a momentary laughter than a half-hour's profound slumber." Certainly it is so rare to see "the whole man developed" in the pulpit, that when it does happen we cannot help feeling indulgent towards the delinquent. Mr. Spurgeon's style appears to us quaint and grotesque, with a strong dash of very genuine humour. He is obviously to the last degree vivacious and susceptible, and being to a great extent an uneducated man, his illustrations constantly overstep the limits of vulgarity; but that is not their special characteristic. There is nothing vulgar, for example, in the following, though it is as grotesque as a gargoyle. "O, may God awaken us all, and stir us up to pray; for when we pray we shall be victorious. I should like to take you this morning as Samson did the foxes, tie the firebrands of prayer to you, and send you in among the shocks of corn till you burn the whole up." The following has a sort of rough energy and force of conviction which is not unlike many of the stories told of Luther and his conflicts with the devil: "A poor tried countryman said the other day, 'I have been troubled with that old devil lately, and I could not get rid of him for a long while; until at last, after he had been adding up all my sins, and bringing them all before my remembrance, I said to him, "You rascal you, did not I transfer all my business to Jesus Christ long ago, bad debts and all? What business have you to bring them here? I laid them all on Christ; go and tell my Master about them. Don't come troubling me."' Well, I thought that was not so bad. It was pretty rough, but it was gloriously true." A man who had always considered his sins as so many debts in the strict sense of the word, and whose mind is habitually occupied with small business-transactions, shows a very forcible and genuine conviction by this kind of language. In fact, if his language is to be genuine and striking at all, it must be taken from the subjects which are familiar to him. To say, "You rascal, don't trouble me; you must speak to my master," is a phrase which has at any rate a positive definite meaning. A man who should say on a similar occasion, "I dwelt on the all-sufficient sacrifice," or "I rejoiced in the blessed blood which

cleanseth us from all sin," would speak, in our opinion, far less sincerely and far less reverently. The one man believes in a real master, a real legal obligation, a real devil in the likeness of a harsh creditor, and a discharge such as he could plead in the county-court; and the other, in a great proportion of cases, only expresses an indefinite feeling in conventional language. The common feelings which form the lasting bonds of human society are generally definite in proportion to their strength. Conjugal and family love, friendship, a sense of duty, a sense of honour, may be described in the very simplest language; and the fact that it is usually considered reverent to speak of God, Christ, heaven, hell, the devil, and the feelings which they excite, in an obscure and indefinite manner, has always appeared to us one of the strongest proofs of the prevalence amongst us of unacknowledged scepticism. Mr. Spurgeon no doubt constantly falls to the most lamentable extent into the other extreme. To speak of such matters very seldom and very plainly would seem to be the course pointed out both by reverence and common sense; but if we must choose between the two, we do not know whether it is not less bad to handle spiritual truths as you would handle a bullock than to handle them as you would handle a mist.

The evils of the style of which we are writing are too obvious to need exposure; but we do not think that the source of its influence over those to whom it is addressed is altogether obvious. We do not at all believe that the buffoonery with which it is mixed is its only or even its principal attraction. Its power seems to us to depend much more on the fact that the person who employs it is so fully possessed by the system which he has adopted that it is natural and easy to him to play with it. The buffoonery is rather the effect than the cause of that which produces the popularity. No Italian friar was ever more perfectly at home in the legends of the saints than Mr. Spurgeon is in what he calls "the three R's—Ruin, Redemption, and Regeneration." To use the language of the pantheistic sensualist, Walt Whitman, "no array of terms can say how much he is at peace about God and death." Though his brethren, as he complains, "call him an Antinomian and a hyper" (hyper-Calvinist), he is as completely satisfied with Calvinism as with the four rules of arithmetic, and cracks his jokes and tells his stories whilst he is explaining the "scheme of salvation" with the same kind of nonchalance with which a barrister, thoroughly accustomed to his business, will chat with his friends whilst he is defending a man on trial for his life. Dr. Newman, with that strange mixture of sense and sophistry which distinguishes him from all other men, has contrived to extract an argument in favour of Romanism from the profanity and superstition of the peasantry

in Catholic countries. Their very oaths and curses, he says, are cast in a Catholic mould. Whether this phenomenon may not admit of a less ingenious solution, we do not at present intend to inquire;\* but Dr. Newman's argument illustrates our meaning with respect to Mr. Spurgeon. His thorough grasp of the subject-matter of his sermons would be obvious enough if he were the most staid of preachers, and the predominating characteristic of his mind is so clearly a certain grotesqueness and whim rather than profanity or even vulgarity, that we are strongly inclined to consider his jocular manifestations as the not unnatural result of the quality which, of all others, gives hearers the greatest confidence in a teacher—thorough and evident familiarity with his topic.

If it be true, as we are inclined to think, that the influence which Mr. Spurgeon exercises arises principally from the fact that he preaches with vigour and liveliness, and in the most uncompromising manner the very sternest form of Calvinism, the inquiry into the reasons of his popularity becomes one of the very deepest interest; an interest in which all personal criticism is entirely merged. To one kind of praise Mr. Spurgeon is most incontestibly entitled: he may be right or he may be wrong, but no human being can doubt his meaning. A more perfectly plain-spoken and intelligible writer we have seldom met with. He does not shrink in the least degree, as a more educated man would be almost sure to do, from sectarian names. Fifty times over he avows that he is a Calvinist in so many words. The following strange rhapsody is perhaps as good an instance of this as could be found. After speaking of the numerical proportion of the Baptists to other sects, and the insignificance of all sects in comparison to Christ, he goes on: "Britain, thou shalt never perish; for the flag of Old England is nailed to the mast by the prayers of Christians, by the efforts of Sunday-schools, and her pious men. But, I say, let even England's name perish—let nations and national distinctions perish, but let Christ's name last for ever. *Perhaps there is only one thing on earth I love better than the last I have mentioned; and that is, the doctrine of pure, unadulterated Calvinism;* but if that be wrong, I for one say let that perish too, and let Christ's name last for ever. Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! 'Crown him Lord of all.' You will not hear me say any thing else. These are my

\* It is hardly a parody of his argument to apply to it the opening stanza of General Calhoun's speech in favour of slavery, preserved in that wonderful piece of humour "The Biglow Papers:"

"Here we stand on the Constitution, by thunder!  
It's a fact of which there's bushels of proof;  
For how could we trample on it so I wonder  
If it wern't that it's always under our hoofs?  
Says John C. Calhoun, says he."

last words in Exeter Hall for this time, Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! Crown him Lord of all!" What Mr. Spurgeon understands by Calvinism is equally plain. In the strange passage to which we have already referred, in which he speaks of "the three R's," Mr. Spurgeon says, that a better "epitome of the Gospel" is to be found in "the five points of Calvinism: election, according to the foreknowledge of God; the natural depravity and sinfulness of man; particular redemption by the blood of Christ; effectual calling by the power of the Spirit; and ultimate perseverance by the power of God's might." We need not dilate on a system, the general features of which are sufficiently well known to every one. How any human being can believe such a doctrine, having regard to the existing condition of the world, and retain his reason, seems to many persons matter of astonishment. That God, being the source of all justice and goodness, should have created a large proportion of the world on purpose that it might be damned, is a proposition which no quantity of evidence or argument would persuade most men to entertain for a moment; for they would contend that it was almost, if not altogether, a contradiction in terms. Nevertheless the fact unquestionably is, that few preachers have ever been more popular or more influential than those who have maintained, in the most uncompromising manner, the doctrine which to many minds presents itself under this form. In Switzerland, Scotland, England, Wales, and North America, this doctrine has been repeatedly preached; and has almost always been received by a considerable class of persons not only with assent but with enthusiasm. The explanation is, we think, to be found in the nature of the doctrines themselves, which have an attractive as well as a repulsive aspect. One great source of their influence is, that they form a system. The fascination which even the appearance of logical consistency exercises over mankind can hardly be overrated. The power of really acquiescing in ignorance is one of the latest accomplishments of a high education. Nothing is more difficult than to recognise, not only in words but in practice, the imperfections of human thought and language. It is a very rare and difficult acquirement, to be content to believe in what is actually known and felt without generalising upon it, and then making the generalisation the ground of the belief, of which in fact it is almost always the effect. It is to the absence of this moral and intellectual modesty that we are inclined to attribute the fascination of systematic theology. Few men have sufficient strength of mind to acquiesce in doctrines imperfectly understood. They are never satisfied until they have woven what they believe into what appears to them a coherent whole; which almost always contains much which they maintain only because they consider its belief

essential to the continuance of their faith in the rest. Rather than give up a set of opinions to which he clearly sees his way, a man will constantly adopt a whole series of opinions from which he would recoil with horror if he did not look upon them as the price of those which he is determined to maintain. On resolving such systems into their component parts by separating the doctrines which form the inducement from those which form the price, the causes of their power become apparent. We believe that this process is peculiarly applicable to the system which is preached by Mr. Spurgeon. Hardly any system can be mentioned which presents greater attractions; and tremendous as the price which is paid for them appears to be, and really is, it is nevertheless capable of being represented in a manner very much less repulsive than would perhaps appear at first sight.

There is probably not one of the five points which Mr. Spurgeon considers as making up in the aggregate an "epitome of the Gospel" which does not represent very strong and natural convictions; some of which are almost inseparable from any kind of belief in a God who interests himself in the affairs of men, whilst others are in the opinion of the vast majority of Christians essential parts of Christianity. To trace out this through the whole of the subject would be an undertaking no doubt of vast interest, but also infinitely too wide and deep for the present occasion. We will, however, attempt to illustrate our meaning by showing that there are strong inducements to the belief of some of the most prominent features of Mr. Spurgeon's system.

Suppose a man really to believe, not merely to admit, that the world and all its contents were created and are sustained by an almighty ever-present God, the source of all that is good and the enemy of all that is bad. Let him also suppose that God really controls the affairs of his creatures, and that in a manner which has more analogy to the way in which one man acts upon the will and character of another than to that in which he acts upon finite matter. Such an opinion almost necessarily involves the notion that whatever relations exist between God and man exist by God's will and not by man's,—that God comes to man, and that man does not go to God. The inferiority of the creature to the Creator, the weakness, the inconsistency, the intermittent character of all human efforts, is such, that it seems almost too wild a supposition to be stated to suppose that man discovered God's existence, attracted his attention, and ultimately earned his favour by his own unassisted efforts. Almost all relations between rational beings are regulated by the superior and accepted by the inferior. It is so in the case of parent and child, of master and servant, of husband and wife, and under almost every form of government in the case of governments and sub-

jects. Those who believe at all in the existence of any other God than the gods of Epicurus, must believe that whatever relations subsist between God and man are referable to the divine and not to the human will. There is but one step from this proposition to one form of the doctrine of election. It is founded on the belief that God is not the author of evil. We have assumed that the inquirer whose case we are considering starts with the notion, however obtained, of a perfectly good and holy being, and applies it to what he sees before him. How can such a being regard evil? That, at any rate, cannot be derived from him. It cannot constitute a part of his relation to mankind, that he stirs them up to sin. It may, and probably does, form a part of his relation to them, that in one way or another he stirs them up to holiness. In the conduct of some men a settled preference for what is good, a settled repugnance to evil, may be traced; in others there would seem to be an indifference to the whole subject; in others, again, the character is enveloped in an impenetrable reserve. Starting with the fundamental belief which we have attributed to the inquirer, the language employed in asserting the doctrine of election is the mere description of a matter of fact. Every man is surrounded, from his cradle to his grave, with a thousand influences; some of which arise from external circumstances, some from bodily constitution, some from thoughts and feelings which present themselves to the mind quite involuntarily. Suppose such influences tend in a good direction and issue in a good result, it is hard to see how a person who habitually refers all good things to the providence of God can speak in any other way of such a person than by saying that God has chosen or elected him. It may, of course, be said that the fundamental belief on which such assertions rest is groundless or uncertain. That is quite another question, and introduces a very different set of considerations. Our present purpose is only to point out that it is almost impossible to separate such a belief in God as we have described from a belief, in one form at least, of the doctrine of election. Indeed, the two beliefs are so closely connected, that many minds would feel that to lose the one would be equivalent to losing the other; and, rather than be forced to do so, they would be ready to accept any consequences with which the belief in question would appear to be legitimately connected.

The second great doctrine of Calvinism, the natural sinfulness and depravity of man, stands upon a footing at least equally broad and intelligible. Whatever theory of morals is adopted, it is undeniably true that the conduct of every man, and the inclinations which prompt his conduct, deviate from it to a very considerable extent. Bentham's morality has generally been supposed



to be that which is most antagonistic to the Christian doctrine. We do not at present intend to consider the justice of this criticism, but even upon Bentham's showing human nature is far from virtuous. If actions are good or bad according to their tendency to produce the greatest happiness of the greatest number, a considerable number of human actions are very bad indeed, and an immense proportion of them can hardly be called good. The fact that people do habitually prefer a small immediate gratification to a great one at some distance,—the fact that they do not habitually strike the balance between the pleasures and pains which will result from a given course of conduct, and act accordingly,—are surely facts which cannot be disputed: but, if we still continue to look at the subject from the point of view which we have already indicated, the significance of moral evil becomes infinitely greater. A man who sets out in his inquiries from the belief in a holy God cannot overlook the existence of evil. With his view of the divine character, he can hardly consider wilful wrong-doing as any thing short of downright rebellion against God's will. It is hardly possible for such a man to doubt that there are in the world two influences irreconcilably hostile and diametrically opposed to each other; nor that, to say the very least, human nature is in great measure on the side of the evil, and opposed to the good. It is far from improbable that he would consider that in such a case neutrality is itself a crime, and that those who are not with God are against him. He is almost certain, in direct proportion to the power of his conception of the divine holiness, to feel that any true theology must in some way or other recognise and embody this antagonism.

The doctrine of particular redemption is, perhaps, of all the Calvinistic doctrines, the one which gives most offence; but if it is regarded from its positive and not from its negative side, if we take its assertions and leave out its exclusions, it is any thing but gloomy. It is indeed a fearful thing to believe that the benefits of the atonement only apply, and were only meant to apply, to a certain number of persons, and that the rest of the world are excluded from them, being either reprobate—created to be damned,—or preterite—passed over, which comes to the same thing; but if the first part of the statement be looked upon as the inducement, and the latter part as the price, the horror of the belief is capable—not, we think, of being removed, but of being very greatly diminished. The belief that Christ is in some way or other the Saviour of the world, and that the benefits which he confers upon mankind are sacrificial, is common to almost all Christians; though of course the nature of the atonement, the meaning of sacrifice, and the exact point at which the mystery,

universally admitted to be inherent in the subject, begins, are questions upon which there is the widest difference of opinion. It may, however, be stated with some confidence, that in all the controversies upon this subject, which so much abound in the present day, no assertion is more frequently met with, especially amongst those who are most in earnest upon the subject, than the following,—that no such doctrine can be true unless it asserts a substantial and not merely a legal or formal atonement. It is certainly not a fanatical or a bigoted party which maintains that an arrangement which gives a technical regularity and consistency with certain legal conceptions of justice, to the proceeding by which sinners are pardoned, is, even if wanted at all, totally incomplete unless it also goes on to free the individual man from sin itself, as well as from the consequences of sin. This belief is certainly embodied to a very considerable extent in the doctrine of particular redemption; at any rate it is consistent with and illustrative of it. Let it be assumed that the ultimate fruit and consequence of redemption is, as Mr. Spurgeon would probably express it, the accomplishment of a great work in the soul—the reclamation, that is, of the man from a state of enmity to a state of peace with God, whereby externally and internally the whole man becomes good; and it will follow that redemption, whether it be regarded as one step in a process or as an act complete in itself, must apply to individuals;—that A, B, and C, must be able to say, not merely “a technical obstacle to the redemption of any man whatever—which would have affected me as well as others—has been removed,” but, “I, A, B, or C, have been and am personally and individually redeemed.” The belief that redemption is substantial, and not merely formal, involves the notion that it is individual or particular. Mr. Maurice, Mr. Jowett, or Mr. Campbell would probably go thus far with Mr. Spurgeon, however vehemently they would repudiate the system into which he weaves this opinion.

The difference between Mr. Spurgeon’s system and the great doctrines which it caricatures is, that it uniformly treats as exceptions what they treat as rules, and *vice versâ*. It makes God an exceptional being in his own universe, creating a world, and being defeated by the devil in its fate. It makes reprobation the rule, and election the exception. It makes evil, not the corruption and depravity of man, but his normal condition, and in a vast preponderance of cases his final doom. Finally, it substitutes general damnation for particular salvation. On the other hand, it is intelligible; it involves only the most inexact conceptions of justice and mercy; and it is capable of being made apparently self-consistent by a number of logical artifices of more or less ingenuity. One of these may be mentioned as a specimen. It con-

sists, as they all do, in playing fast and loose with language ; and like all the rest, it involves an entirely anthropomorphic conception of the divine character. It is not unjust, it is said, in God to give no grace to the wicked, and then to punish them for the sins which are the consequence of an absence of grace ; for he never promised to give it, and is not bound to do more than he promised. Or, to use Mr. Spurgeon's language, which we do not blame for being lively and plain-spoken, but which conveys thoughts too audacious, we should have thought, for any human being to conceive, "But," says the objector, "is it not unjust for God to manifest himself to one and not the other?" God replies, "Dost thou charge me with injustice? In what respect? Do I owe thee any thing? Bring the bill, and I will pay it. Do I owe you grace? Then grace would not be grace ; it would be a debt. If I owe you grace, you shall have it." "But why should my brother have it? he is equally as bad as I." "Surely," replies the King, "I may give as I please. Thou hast two beggars at thy door ; hast thou not a right to turn one away and give the other something? And can I not do as I will with my own? I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and to whom I will I give it." . . . "If I have fifty men on a scaffold to be hung, have I not a right to pardon which I will, and give the punishment to all the rest?" If any one is absurd enough to suppose that God has made a contract with men which he has failed to perform, this might be a not unfair answer ; but the objection to be answered is, that the arrangement is unfair in itself ; that it implies that God reaps where he has not sown, and gathers where he has not strewed ; and it is surely no virtue to enforce a hard bargain. Mr. Spurgeon's illustration about the fifty men on the scaffold is a curious instance of the narrow conceptions which he forms of justice as between God and man. He seems to consider that the relations between them are not only merely legal, but are regulated exclusively by the most technical and objectionable rules of English law. No doubt the Queen has by law a right to pardon A and to hang B, who is in precisely the same position ; that is, she has a power to do so, which the law of England will respect, and, if necessary, enforce ; but if the Home Secretary advised her to do so, he would be subject to the severest parliamentary censure, because the act would be in the last degree unjust and arbitrary. Yet Mr. Spurgeon seems to think that what would be an iniquity in the Queen is a perfection in God.

It may perhaps be acknowledged that the system to which we are referring owes its attractiveness to the definite view which it affords of the fundamental doctrines of theology, from which it entirely eliminates all mystery and incompleteness, and to its semblance of logical consistency. But it may be asked, How

can any human being pay the price demanded for these advantages? How can any one bear to believe what is involved in the doctrines of preterition and reprobation? The answer is twofold. In the first place, no one can deny that life, however it may be considered, has an awfully stern side. Set aside Christianity altogether, put the very existence of God out of the question, and still the passage of all the multitudes from the darkness which shrouded one end of the bridge of Mirza to the stream which flowed past the broken arches at the other end, cannot be called an altogether cheerful or hopeful one. The conviction that life is in itself a blessing, is by no means so obvious or universal as it appears to persons accustomed only to Christian and European forms of thought and feeling. One of the best sermons of a great living divine—Mr. Maurice—powerfully contrasts the Christian sentiment that the last enemy which shall be subdued is death with Strauss's emendation, that the last enemy which shall be subdued is the dread of immortality. "It is better to walk than to run; better to stand than to walk; better to sit than to stand; better to lie down than to sit; better to sleep than to lie down, and better to die than to sleep"—is still a proverb, which expresses the highest conviction of a great proportion of the human race. Admit into the mind the belief in a just and holy God, and whatever hopes that doctrine may excite are hopes largely tempered by awe. Death may ultimately be swallowed up in victory; but the victory must be preceded by an awful combat. It is no doubt a malignant falsehood to deny that in almost every man's life there is much that is good. To most men it must be, we should think, cheering to see how much good remains even in the vilest criminals. When the miserable Burke was convicted of the most atrocious series of crimes committed in modern times, he threw his arms round the neck of his fellow-prisoner who was acquitted, kissed her, and exclaimed, "Thank God, Mary, you are saved."\* Though the man who did this had committed at least sixteen murders in cold blood for the sake of selling the bodies of his victims, some good feeling must have still remained in him. On the other hand, he *had* committed sixteen murders; and surely such a fact, which is by no means a solitary one, discloses a state of things sufficiently awful. Can any thing be a true account of God's dealings with men which slurs over the whole class of facts of which this is a single instance? Does the analogy either of nature or of human law warrant us in believing that the Judge of all the earth would do right if such crimes went unpunished? on the other hand, does experience teach us that men are always reformed by punishment? At the

\* Alison's *History of the French Revolution*, iv. 301, note. Sir A. Alison was counsel for the Crown in Burke's case.

end of the second apocalyptic woe, it is written, that "the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven;" but after the pouring out of the fifth vial, "they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds." A man must be more bold than wise who can find, either in his own observations or in the Bible, authority for looking upon the present condition and future prospects of mankind as altogether cheerful. It is perfectly true that the New Testament claims to be an announcement of good tidings of great joy, and that a system which makes it a message of bad tidings is bad on the face of it; but it is equally true that the good news was not brought before it was wanted, and that much of the evil which it denounced and condemned still subsists. To persons deeply impressed with these views of life, a theology without a hell is a mere mockery. Men will always look upon God as a God to whom vengeance belongeth. No one who has a really strong perception of the difference between good and evil, can wish to see the sores of life skinned over. Thoughts of this kind are natural to the mind, and to stifle them is to degrade a man into a brute; but, on the other hand, to attempt to ascertain their exact value, to assume the balance and the rod, to arrange them in a system, to affect to apportion punishments, and to set up tests for the detection of criminals, is nothing less than to attempt to exalt man into a god—an attempt which has not unfrequently ended in debasing him into a devil.

A second explanation of the adoption of a system which involves consequences so frightful is less *intellectually* creditable to those who accept them. It consists simply in this, that they shrink from and evade their own conclusions. It would be hard to find a more systematic and plain-spoken advocate than Mr. Spurgeon; but even he recoils before the frightful consequences of his own theory. It is obvious that the two doctrines of particular—by which Mr. Spurgeon understands not only individual but also *exclusive*—redemption, and effectual calling, taken together, limit the benefits of the gospel to a very small number of persons indeed—to those, namely, who have experienced certain peculiar states of mind. Now the whole of the theory which Mr. Spurgeon propounds rests on the notion that the glory of God is the ultimate purpose of the whole Christian dispensation; and if the vast majority of mankind are created only to be damned, the devil has got the best of the struggle. Mr. Spurgeon feels the difficulty, and states it as follows: "How often do I hear people say, 'Ah, strait is the gate, and narrow the way; and few there be that find it. There will be very few in heaven; there will be most lost.' My friend, I differ from you. Do you think that

Christ will let the devil beat him? that he will let the devil have more in hell than there will be in heaven?—No; it is impossible. For then Satan would laugh at Christ. There will be more in heaven than there are among the lost. God says that ‘there will be a number that no man can number that will be saved;’ but he never says that there will be a number that no man can number that will be lost. There will be a host beyond all count that will get into heaven.” And elsewhere he accounts for this by saying that all who die in childhood, and the large number of persons who will be born during the millennium, will turn the balance. This is no doubt puerile enough; for it only amounts to this—that wherever the experiment is fairly tried, the devil gets the best of it; but a clearer proof could hardly be given of the fact, that the harsher doctrines of the system which Mr. Spurgeon and those who agree with him preach are accepted rather because they embody the general impression that there is a dark and fearful side to life than from any definite belief in their truth. If it were otherwise, could any honest man play with the doctrines of election and conversion so far as to assert, first, that “every carnal mind in the world is at enmity against God,” and that “this does not exclude even infants at the mother’s breast” (p. 152); and afterwards (p. 349) that all those who die in infancy are doubtless elect, and do each of them ascend to heaven? Surely the doctrine of reprobation is not more harsh or less well founded as against infants than as against grown men; but from this consequence Mr. Spurgeon shrinks. The author, whoever he was, of that fearful poem “The last Judgment,” which Sir C. Lyell found still in use in parts of New England, was more consistent:

“Then to the Judge their souls drew near  
That died in infancy,  
And so had neither good nor bad  
Effected corporally.”

They urge their innocence *de facto*; but are met with the reply that Adam was their federal head; that if he had not sinned, they would have claimed heaven on the ground of his righteousness; and that as he has, they must suffer the penalty of his sin. They acknowledge the justice of the reply, and are taken away to the pit with much lamentation:

“The wrath of God doth feed the flame  
With store of wood and brimstone flood,  
That none should quench the same.”

This, no doubt, is the most consistent view of the doctrine; but we prefer Mr. Spurgeon’s not discreditable inconsistency to the frame of mind of the man who “passed an hour in comfortable reflection on the infinite mercy of God in damning little children”

—suffering them to go to the devil, and forbidding them not, for of such is the kingdom of hell. Another instance of the same tendency is to be found in Mr. Spurgeon's practical application of the doctrine of election. It is thought harsh by some persons, he says (p. 316); but what right have they to complain? If they desire holiness sincerely, they *are* elected to it; "but if you don't desire it, why on earth should you be so preposterously foolish as to complain because God gives that which you do not like to other people?" Viewed as an *argumentum ad hominem*, such a statement as this stops the mouth of a certain class of objectors. No doubt a man is inconsistent if he complains of not having what he does not want; but though the remark may disembarass the preacher of an antagonist, it still leaves him open to the question, why the man does not want it. The effort to silence an opponent by a mere temporary expedient of this kind shows the preacher's anxiety to get on his own side the very conceptions which he has repudiated. With all his professions of perfect satisfaction with the doctrine of the Divine sovereignty, it does not really satisfy him. He eagerly snatches at an opportunity of making out, in some moderately intelligible manner, that the sinner's state is his own fault, and that he has no right to complain.

It would be easy to multiply illustrations of the devices by which the reception of the awful doctrines to which we have referred is facilitated; but we have said enough to show what are the inducements to accept them, how the price which has to be paid for their acceptance is not really so great as it would seem to be at first sight, and how great an anxiety is felt to diminish it still further by any sort of contrivance.

We can well imagine the contempt with which Mr. Spurgeon would read such criticisms as these, if they should ever come under his notice. "What," he would ask, "have mere human speculations to do with truth divinely revealed? I did not make the world—I did not discover its constitution. Your objections are levelled not against me, but against God and against the Bible." This is not the place to go into the question of the real nature and authority of the book which Mr. Spurgeon so constantly, so familiarly, and, at the same time, so ignorantly, invokes. Whether man is so ignorant of God by nature that, upon further evidence, he would be forced to worship him for possessing the very attributes which are usually ascribed to the devil; whether, upon proof of the performance of certain miracles, it is right to believe in the statements made by the person performing them, without any reference at all to the character of those statements; whether, in short, evidence of a revelation from God can be carried high enough to crush the conscience of man,—are questions which we need not discuss with Mr. Spurgeon until he can show

far more conclusively than he ever has or, in our opinion, ever will show that the case has actually arisen. Our business with him is much shorter and simpler, and consists in two points: first, that he is entirely and blindly ignorant of all the difficulties which embarrass the question of the authority of the Bible; and secondly, that whatever its authority may be, it contains very little of what he does, and a great deal of what he does not, preach. In short, we have no hesitation in affirming that he does not know what the Bible is; and that he interprets it entirely by the light of a tradition, which colours all his conceptions as completely as blue glasses colour the field of vision of their wearer. These are points upon which we should not have considered it necessary to insist, if they had not a far wider application than that which concerns Mr. Spurgeon. His sermons may be taken as typical specimens of the performances of the large and most influential class of popular preachers. The character of his congregation gives him some advantages over his more polished rivals. He is able to express in plain words what they frequently shroud in unmeaning circumlocutions. He is not restrained by respect for the taste or education of his hearers from making his meaning unmistakably plain; and therefore his sermons expose, perhaps even more strongly than any others which could be mentioned, the entirely traditional and conventional character of a great part of our current biblical criticism.

Mr. Spurgeon's view of the character of the Bible is perfectly simple. The following passage describes it, not without power, and in a manner which puts all mistake and misconception out of the question.

"First, then, concerning this book,—who is the author? The text says that it is God. [The text,—“I have written to him (Ephraim) the great things of my law; but they were counted as a strange thing,” Hosea viii. 12,—says nothing in the remotest degree like it. Does Mr. Spurgeon suppose that Hosea had read the New Testament?] Here lies my Bible,—who wrote it? I open it, and I find it consists of a series of tracts. The first five tracts were written by a man called Moses. I turn on, and I find others. Sometimes I see David is the penman; at other times, Solomon, &c. But when I shut the book, I ask myself, Who is the author of it? Do these men jointly claim the authorship? Are they the compositors of this massive volume? Do they between themselves divide the honour? Our holy religion answers, No. This volume was the writing of the living God: each letter was penned with an almighty finger; each word in it dropped from the everlasting lips; each sentence was dictated by the Holy Spirit.”

A little further on, Mr. Spurgeon declines to enter into a formal proof of his opinion, but glances at the various topics by



which he should do so if necessary. They consist almost entirely in declamatory assertions of the intrinsic value of the contents of the Bible, and lead up to a denunciation of all who do not adopt his own view of the subject as infidels. Of course Mr. Spurgeon rejects the authority of tradition except for the purpose of establishing the truth of these extraordinary and monstrous assertions. He must therefore believe them upon independent evidence of their truth; and we would ask him to consider within himself, honestly and quietly, not when he is shouting denunciations of hell-fire against the great majority of the existing generation of men, but at some moment of comparative calm, whether he is aware that to almost every one who has considered the subject with the most ordinary fairness the doctrine which he puts forward as forming with infidelity the only alternative open to rational beings is palpably and demonstrably false. Not to go beyond very elementary matters indeed, will Mr. Spurgeon favour the world with his opinion on Mr. Alford's introduction to his edition of the New Testament, or with his method of reconciling the genealogies in the gospels of Matthew and Luke? If, as we suspect, he never heard of Mr. Alford's existence, and never knew of any discrepancy between the genealogies, we can inform him that he is utterly ignorant of the very A B C of his subject; and he has just as much right to dictate to mankind in general, and to the New-Park-Street congregation in particular, as to what the authority of the Bible is, as he has to take Lord Campbell's seat on the bench at Westminster Hall, or to replace Sir Benjamin Brodie in his consulting-room. He occupies, or ought to occupy, the place of the unlearned. He has no right to speak positively on controverted subjects. He is not, as he says himself, "much of an argumentative preacher;" and yet he does nothing but argue on premises of the trustworthiness of which he has no means of judging, and to conclusions which involve the use of terms of the meaning of which he is absolutely ignorant. A man who asserts with vehement confidence doctrines of such immense importance, ought at least to have a competent knowledge of the grounds of his teaching. Mr. Spurgeon would perhaps say that he preaches what he knows and feels, and that his own experience assures him of the truth of the Bible, which informs him of the rest of his doctrines. Now we should be far from quarrelling with a man for maintaining that he had had experimental proof of the fact that the Bible contains much that is true; for, after all, such doctrines as effectual calling, conversion, the existence of spiritual influences, and the like, must be tested by individual experience, because the subject admits of no other kind of proof; but has Mr. Spurgeon, for example, ever had an experimental proof of the fact that St. Paul

was divinely inspired when he told Timothy that he had left his cloak at Troas with Carpus? The utmost that he or any man can say upon the subject is, that he sees no other way of accounting for what he has felt than that of supposing that each letter of the Bible "was penned by an almighty finger," and that therefore he supposes the fact to be so. This is not experimental conviction, but a deduction from experimental conviction, which is quite a different thing.

Mr. Spurgeon, however, does not hesitate to take even higher ground than this. He goes the length of saying that he is inspired himself. He says in his preface, that he has "learned theology in another school than that of men." And again (p. 266), "If a man be truly called of God to the ministry, I will defy him to withhold himself from it. A man who really has within him the inspiration of the Holy Ghost calling him to preach, cannot help it." And in another place he says, that on one occasion, when preaching in Scotland, he felt quite uninspired. We do not wish to ridicule or to deny these statements. How far the influences of the Spirit may extend, to whom, and in what proportion, is a great mystery; but taking Mr. Spurgeon's own account as a true one, he is in his own person a conclusive proof that an inspired man may make great blunders,—an observation which we would recommend him to consider well the next time he preaches about the Bible. Whatever may or may not be the results of Mr. Spurgeon's inspiration, it is unquestionably consistent not only with ignorance of Greek, but almost with ignorance of the fact that such a language exists at all. In his wonderful sermon on the Bible, Mr. Spurgeon violently reproaches the ministers who "alter God's Bible because they are afraid of it." "He that believeth not,—what does the Bible say?—'shall be damned.' But that does not happen to be polite enough, so they say 'shall be condemned.' . . . . Pity they were not born where God lived far far back, that they might have taught God how to write." As the Bible says neither "damned" nor "condemned," but *κριθήσεται*, it would have been more to the purpose if they had lived when the Bible was translated than when it was written. Does Mr. Spurgeon usually tell his congregation that "he that believeth not is damned already?" or that "This is the damnation, that light hath come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light?" It is not, however, to the word "damned" only that Mr. Spurgeon is so deeply attached. He sets equal store by the word "shall." According to his view of the case, it proves that future punishments are everlasting. "The threat of God is as unchangeable as God himself. And when a thousand years of hell's torments shall have passed away, you shall look on high, and see written

in burning letters of fire, 'He that believeth not *shall* be damned.' 'But, Lord, I *am* damned.' Nevertheless it says, *shall* be still. And when a million ages have rolled away, you shall still read, 'SHALL BE DAMNED.' (sic.) Inasmuch as *κρίθησεται* might be translated "will" quite as well as "'shall' be damned," Mr. Spurgeon may as conclusively deduce that damnation is only a threat never to be executed, but always *in futuro*. The words "shall" and "will" have a positive fascination for Mr. Spurgeon. "O, I love God's shalls and wills. Let a man say 'shall,' what is it good for? 'I will,' says man, and he never performs; 'I shall,' says he, and breaks his promise. But it is never so with God's 'shalls.' If he says 'shall,' it shall be; if he says 'will,' it will be. Now he says here, 'Many *shall* come.' The devil says, 'They shall not come;' but 'they shall come.' Their sins say, 'You can't come;' God says, 'You shall come.' You yourselves say 'You won't come;' God says, 'You shall come.'" It is fortunate that Mr. Spurgeon is not a Scotchman or an Irishman, or all the phrases which he now looks upon as commands would become predictions, and the predictions would be turned into commands.

We will give but one instance of the manner in which Mr. Spurgeon—and he is only one illustration amongst a thousand of the same thing—varies entirely in his teaching from the verbal teaching of the Bible, even *after* he has taken his stand upon the verbal inspiration of the Bible in its most literal form. There is hardly any subject on which he lays more stress than that of the future punishments of the wicked. His sermons abound in fearful descriptions of hell. Eternal flames, red-hot iron, awful groans and lamentations, fearful taunts and recriminations, are the materials of one side of his picture. On the other hand, he insists constantly on the contrast between the feelings of the saved and the damned. Parents will rejoice, he says, in the divine justice, when they see their children in hell; wives will feel no pain at the spectacle of their husbands' torments; and the preaching of a minister, which has no other result than that of being a savour of death unto death, is not in vain, for God is glorified in the damnation of sinners. Now we will not rebuke Mr. Spurgeon, or any other preacher, merely for speaking on the theme of future retribution. People constantly indulge themselves in much false and empty boasting about their own moral superiority to such arguments. It is the cheapest kind of courage to profess to be uninfluenced by terrors the reality of which is secretly or openly disbelieved. We will take no such course. We will not, on the other hand, discuss with Mr. Spurgeon the meaning of the passages of Scripture to which he refers; nor will we enter into any questions relating to the nature and

meaning of the word "eternal." We will confine ourselves to a very simple remark indeed. Of all the subjects upon which a preacher can address his congregation, the subject in question is the very last in which he ought to exceed his commission. There is surely none in which he ought more rigidly to study not only the words of his authority, but also the frequency with which the subject is handled, and the connection in which it is introduced. We assert, in the strongest manner, that the way in which the subject of "eternal damnation," no matter what be the meaning we may attach to the words, is handled by Mr. Spurgeon, and the class of popular preachers who resemble him, is utterly and radically unlike the way in which it is handled in the New Testament. Similarity consists, amongst other things, in the proportion and relative prominence of the different parts of a set of doctrines. Damnation, described in the plainest and most definite manner as consisting of numberless ages of physical torment, is perhaps the most prominent doctrine of Mr. Spurgeon's preaching. The references to the subject in the New Testament are, without any exception, indefinite and mysterious. In many books of it—as, for example, in the epistles of St. Paul—the doctrine hardly appears at all; in others—as in the Revelation—the whole question is so involved in metaphor and scenical representation, that it is impossible to make any definite statement as to its meaning. In the summaries of Christian doctrine delivered by St. Paul to the Jews and Athenians, in the 13th and 17th chapters of the Acts, no mention is made of this doctrine; and even the well-known passages in the Gospels furnish no explicit and categorical statement on the subject. Surely these undeniable facts might suggest to the most literal interpreters in general, and Mr. Spurgeon in particular, that it is possible to preach this doctrine too prominently and too definitely, and that the very manner in which it is treated shows that it was not intended to be made the one distinctive feature of Christianity. As to the fearful and unnaturally horrible satisfaction which Mr. Spurgeon has the audacity—unauthorised by one syllable of the Bible—to impute to those who are saved in contemplating the tortures of their nearest and dearest friends in hell, we will only ask him to reflect very seriously what spirit he is of. He believes that Jesus Christ died on the cross to save sinners. If those who are so saved rejoice in the damnation of their fellow-sinners, they are most unlike their God and most unlike their Saviour. There is but one being who can consistently rejoice in the damnation of the wicked, and that is the devil. If Mr. Spurgeon will compare with his own infernal language the parable of Dives and Lazarus, he will, we should hope, find matter which will make him ashamed for the rest of

his life for the frightful libel which he has uttered against the gospel. Abraham is not described as exulting in the punishment of Dives, whom he addresses as "Son;" Dives is not described as cursing his six brethren, and longing for their ruin. The subject of retribution is a fearful one, however it is regarded. We do not wish a preacher to shrink from handling it; but surely a man who, without any authority at all, defines its limits, ignores its modifications, and takes no notice of the manner in which it is introduced into the book which he professes to expound, is guilty of a very grave offence.

In conclusion, we would direct Mr. Spurgeon's attention to a point which is often neglected by the class to which he belongs. His case is, that he preaches the gospel, and is not answerable either for the substance or for the results of his preaching. We have shown some reasons which may lead him to doubt whether preaching the gospel is exactly the same thing as preaching his own conclusions from the gospel. If he is in doubt upon the subject, its solution may possibly be assisted by the test of experience. Some of his doctrines may be true, but they are awfully liable to be misunderstood. We do not say, and we do not think, that the doctrine of justification by faith is immoral; but we do say that doctrines easily mistaken or substituted for it are desperately immoral and incalculably mischievous. If a man chooses to preach about election, and the Divine sovereignty, and the effects of grace and free-will, he is dealing with edge-tools; and if, from human passion, infirmity, love of controversy, or vanity, he makes a slip, he is exceedingly likely to preach a doctrine of devils. Mr. Spurgeon tells us that a City missionary of his acquaintance thought that he had converted about 2,000 people in one year, and that at the end of the next year he found that only one case of the 2,000 was genuine; and he tells us from his own experience the following frightful story: "I have seen the man who stood upon the table of a public-house, and grasping the glass in his hand said, 'Mates, I can say more than any of you: I am one of those who are redeemed with Jesus' precious blood;' and then he drank his tumbler of ale, and danced again before them, and sang vile and blasphemous songs. Now that is a man to whom the gospel is a savour of death unto death." Is he quite so sure of that? May not the preacher's misrepresentation of the gospel have been the savour of death unto death? Has he never used language himself which would give a logical justification and a ghastly consistency to the blasphemy of this poor wretch, and of others like him? We do not wish to decide the question; we only suggest the inquiry. It is one which ought to sadden, to humble, and to terrify a popular preacher,

if he filled the largest church in England ten times a week with the most attentive of congregations.

We may appear to some of our readers to have treated Mr. Spurgeon too seriously. We do not think that it is possible to consider too seriously the character of teaching which stirs the minds of vast masses of people to their very inmost depths. To us his popularity is a phenomenon of no ordinary kind. The character of the man himself is of little or no importance. It would have been no difficult matter to have covered him with ridicule, for his style is full of the grossest and crudest absurdities, and his want of education causes him constantly to fall into blunders of the most ludicrous description; but if we look on him as a phenomenon he is not ridiculous, but at once a subject of hope and of fear. We have tried to explain in some degree the source of his popularity; but the consequences of his popularity would form a subject more curious still. What may not be hoped of a nation so conversant with, and so intent upon, the highest subjects of human thought that even its lowest classes prefer theology to the drama? What may not be feared from a nation which carries into theology the same trenchant audacity which characterises it in every other walk of life, and the same uncontrollable love of adventure and excitement which has made Englishmen alternately the pride and the terror of the world? What a glimpse Mr. Spurgeon's sermons give us of the stern wild features of the class to which they are addressed! The people with whom these sermons are popular are not a puny or a childish race, but one capable of feeling that the deepest of all mysteries are in some way or other vitally connected with their every-day life. They are at present groping darkly after the solution of the problem. Mr. Spurgeon certainly has not found a very complete or true one; but he has found one which excites the deepest feelings of thousands of his fellow-creatures; and though it contains much that is palpably and demonstrably false, it also contains that which no one can deny to be true who believes that any truth at all is attainable upon these subjects. Who will divide the wheat from the chaff? Who will seize and direct aright the springs which men like Mr. Spurgeon handle vigorously no doubt, but so coarsely and ignorantly, that to many minds they do more harm than good? It is seldom that the Sphinx has propounded a deeper riddle.

ART. V.—LATHAM AND GRIMM ON THE ETHNOLOGY  
OF GERMANY.

*The Germania of Tacitus.* By Dr. R. G. Latham. Walton and Maberly, 1851.

*Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache.* By Jacob Grimm. Leipzig, 1848.

THE battle concerning the unity of the human races has not yet been fought out: the adverse combatants are as confident as though nothing had been said to the purpose on the opposite side. In part, this has been owing to a Mosaic and to an anti-Mosaic bias; but still more, we suspect, to that mist of obscurity which all controversies fomented by religious passion are apt to diffuse, far beyond the region in which that passion dwells. One school uses words in a different sense from another; in which case each is liable to erroneous reasoning by the inveterate ambiguity of terms. In this controversy there is, as it appears to us, also a tendency to mistake the question really at issue; and although we are about to address ourselves to the races of ancient Germany, it will give clearness to our remarks if we prefix some thoughts concerning the wider argument.

In speculating on the earlier history of man, especially in respect to the propagation of human races, it may be maintained that they *have*, or that they *have not*, sprung out of a single homogeneous and narrowly localised race. To determine which of these two hypotheses is true, if it can be determined by science, is of course matter of scientific interest. But there is a second question, which is ordinarily confounded with the first,—we mean, whether human races *did* or *did not* spring from a single pair of progenitors, male and female—an Adam and an Eve. To prove that all mankind are of one race, and diffused from one locality, will never prove that all came from a single pair; which, though capable of being received as a doctrine of specific revelation, seems impossible to be proved by science, and loaded with considerable improbability as soon as one begins to reason about it, from whatever presumption we start concerning the origin of man. For if, *on the one hand*, we believe man to have been created by a strictly supernatural process (by the “immediate hand” of God), yet, unless an infinite series of miracles is imagined to follow, the utter helplessness of an isolated man and woman, whose lives—and with them all the hopes of the future species—are in daily extreme danger, would make every merely scientific inquirer take for granted that the wisdom of the Creator would produce mankind *in mass* at once, both

for physical security and for moral development. It is an old remark, how the divine wisdom is displayed in the fecundity of feeble animals on which the powerful ones prey; and to expose one pair of human beings to all the risks of such a world as this, would be by no means in harmony with that arrangement. But even this is not the strongest argument. It is a familiar thought that gregarious animals are in an unnatural state when isolated; and even on that account,—to say nothing of danger from wild-beasts,—no man speculating on the origin of cows or horses would imagine that they are derived from a single pair. Gregariousness being their nature, we take for granted that they were created in troops, in order that that nature might at once have its gratification and its development. Now in man the same argument is of tenfold strength: for to his moral nature a varied society is essential; and for moral development he was created. A wife fills the largest share in the heart of a husband; but a single married pair cannot afford to one another the whole moral interest and moral exercise which is demanded for the culture of the heart and development of the powers. As, then (not knowing the contrary), we presume that gregarious animals were from their origin gregarious, much more would one who did not know the contrary presume that man; being a social, political, and moral being, was from his origin furnished with the varied companionship of his fellows.

But if, *on the other hand*, we could suppose that (whether by the will and design of an Infinite Governor, or by the undirected unintelligent powers of Nature) man and other animals were generated mediately, by influences eternally acting whenever physical conditions permit, it is then nearly unimaginable that a single pair of any animals ever where exhausted the whole productiveness of Nature. The same influences which produced one man and woman, would simultaneously produce hundreds: for no locality large enough for human life can have been so small as to allow but two births. On the whole, we conclude that the derivation of mankind from a single pair ought not to be regarded as any matter of contest between men of science. Those who think that they are arguing for it on scientific grounds, are really arguing to prove a different proposition, namely, that which we stated first—the derivation of all human races from one race; and if they can prove this, they have indeed *left room* for the further opinion that the original race came from a single pair, but that is all.

Those who (on whatever grounds) regard the testimony of the book of Genesis as indecisive in this argument, must probably always start from the presumption of a multiplicity of human races: a presumption which may be either disproved or



confirmed, but which is to be held until disproved; for the differences of climate manifestly require an adaptation in every human race; and it is beyond dispute that the change of races, so as to make them thoroughly fitted to a foreign climate, is an extremely slow process. Let us allow that a negro race might at length be possessed of full vigour in Canada, and an English race in India; still (until we have evidence to that effect) we do not easily believe that one climate was (so to say) made a favourite for human origination; that the constitution of the race was primitively adapted in perfection to that one group of physical circumstances, and was then left by slow and painful degrees to acquire aptitude for other circumstances. This *may* have been the process. There *may* have been excellent reasons for it. But prior to any specific information on the point, all will assume the opposite presumption, that many human races had independent origin, each being from the beginning fitted to its own climate and conditions. Such was the meaning attached by the ancients to the word 'indigenous,' which was popularly paraphrased by saying that each race sprang from its own soil.

But there is yet another question, far more important than this, which is liable to be obscured in the controversy. On both sides it is too apt to be asserted or implied that *to hold a multiplicity of human origins is to deny the unity of the human species*; and we judge this confusion to be the worst by far of all which the heat of the contest has engendered. No one would for a moment allow that the naturalist held *horses* to consist of an indefinite number of species because he believed their origin to have been from an indefinite number of individuals, and not from a single pair. Every body's meaning and test of unity of species in the horse is found in present fact—in the likenesses and unlikenesses of nature now existing; but whether the origin was from two or from two thousand individuals is not to the purpose. So also, whether the original individuals came to life all in Africa, or some in Africa and some in Tartary, has nothing to do with the question whether the Tartar horse and the African horse are of the same species: that, again, must be judged by other considerations, especially from the sameness or diversity of powers and instincts, and from the capacity of fusing themselves into a mixed race which retains all the powers of the progenitors. The same considerations must be applied to human races. One theorist believes that Englishmen, Papuans, Hottentots, Aztecs, are of four different origins; another that they are all from one forefather: but the disputants need not be the less agreed that all four races are strictly of the same species—man. The great variety of faculties, passions, affections, and tendencies, as well as of instincts, bodily powers, and peculiarities, found in

human races, give far greater severity to the test of a common manhood, and proportionate facility of rejecting intrusive pretenders. Science is not needed. Common sense as infallibly teaches man to distinguish man, as dog to recognise dog; and it is deplorable that the prominent and notorious certainty of the unity of the human species should ever have been supposed at stake in a question on which probable opinions may be held, but which can never become a scientific certainty of the same order,—the question, under what circumstances human races had their origin.

Thus, we apprehend, on the unity of the human species all are agreed; the question is settled by common sense, and is one of the substantial facts on which science has to build, but which no science can root up. The derivation of that one species from one pair of progenitors is a doctrine for which no *scientific* reasons are ever adduced by those who think they are maintaining it. Finally, the question whether that one species has always existed in many races, or once existed as only one race—this is the real matter about which, and about which alone, there is scientific dispute.

And here the facts of history, recent as is our knowledge, are such as to show the dangers of that most necessary process, *à priori* argument. Who that looks upon Germany, England, even Northern Italy, could, without history, have conjectured that three to four thousand years ago, when Egypt and China, India and Babylon, abounded with dense population and elaborate civilisation, our lands were covered with forest or morass; and if not absolutely without human population, yet were only wandered over by almost savage men? So much, indeed, Tacitus and Livy and Herodotus knew; but they did not know—what since the English conquest of India has been brought to light by the labours of grammarians, beginning from Sir William Jones—that the language spoken by the British, the German, the Cisalpine, the Scythian savages, *proves* them to be emigrants from the same centre of population as the people of Persia and of Bengal. The proof is of the highest degree of cogency, and admits of no evasion; nor are there two opinions about it among learned men, whatever in other respects their doctrines or tendencies. Thus, *à priori*, we should have expected Britain, Germany, Gaul, Italy, Greece, to have been peopled as early as Babylonia, Egypt, India, and China: *à posteriori*, we find this to be contrary to the fact; and that it is a doctrine not merely of religion, but also of history and of science, that Europe has been entirely, or almost\* entirely, peopled from the East and South-

\* We say *almost*, because of the yet uncertain relations of the Iberian or Basque population.

east. Again, the physical constitution of a Brahmin is so different from that of an Englishman, that, *but* for the phenomena of language, it is scarcely probable that the advocates of many original human races would have admitted it as an open question whether both were of one descent. We are aware that the gap between the lower races of India and the Brahmin is considerable; and so is that between the Pariah and the Negro. There may be adequate scientific reasons for rather believing in several than in a single origin; but when, resting on physical diversities, men talk dogmatically on the "absolute *impossibility*" of Negrillos, even in the ages of time given us by geology, becoming modified into Egyptians, or Pariahs into Brahmins,—whatever the eminence of such men, they do but make us regret that science is not always modest.

The discovery of the intimate early relation between Gauls, Britons, Germans, Slavonians, Latins, Greeks, and Indo-Perians, ought materially to affect many of our opinions and reasonings concerning the tribes and nations mentioned in Greek and Roman authors. It being admitted that there once was a time when the Gaulish, the German, the Lithuanian tribes differed very little in language, it is irrational to assume that two or three thousand years ago there were the same chasms between European languages as now. The phenomena of great continents thinly overspread with an unstable and barbarous population are known to us in modern times; and we can pronounce that when it has proceeded from one source, there will be a vast development of imperfect languages, connected by partial agreements, so as (if we could see and know the whole) in all probability to have nowhere any abrupt and violent diversity. The effect of great kingdoms, empires, and civilisation, is to perfect the imperial language, and extinguish by the dozen those dialects or languages which exist by its side: whence, as time goes on, gaps are produced in the series. Side by side with this, under the operation of political causes, national characters are brought out into sharper contrast; and by the long operation of habits, food, and climate, even physical peculiarities arise which were not always in the race.

Grimm, the very first authority concerning the old German languages, in the reasonings of the work before us, distinctly treats the ancient Danes as one people with the Germans,—as undoubtedly Pliny and Tacitus supposed them. We accept this as an assurance that Grimm believes the vast chasm now separating the Danish and German tongues to have been generated by the history of 1800 years. At this moment the process is rapidly going on, which, by exterminating the various shades of dialect that are named Platt Deutsch, will leave a chasm be-

tween the Dutch and the German. It is inevitable to infer that in the time of Cæsar, when neither did the Britons talk exactly the modern Welsh, nor the people of Celtica exactly the modern Breton; when neither the Frisian, nor the Dutch, nor German, nor Danish, were what they now are;—it is within possibility that many tongues existed intermediate to those of the great families now known—tongues which have since perished, exaggerating the gap between nations. At any rate, we ought not to wonder at the hesitation and contradictions of ancient writers, when they endeavour to mark sharply the limits of languages. Rather, without involving the case of mixed nations, we ought to expect that even to the best-informed it would be impossible to refer their languages to so few heads as those which the moderns recognise. Nevertheless, the tendency of modern writers who mean to be particularly scientific is generally towards hardening and intensifying the separation of races. They discuss whether Belgians or Ligurians were of Celtic or of German stock in a tone which implies that there cannot have been any thing between, and as though Gauls and Germans were original, permanent, eternal existences. It must be admitted that ethnologists have yet much to do in clearing their first principles and justifying their nomenclature.

The two works at the head of this article are in such startling contrast concerning the extent of the ancient *German* tribes as to be almost ludicrous. The real contrast is, indeed, not so great as the apparent, since it is pretty clear that Grimm, with us, believes that in those days the languages were less sharply divided, and gives a very undesirable vagueness to his use of the word "German." Still, with all such allowance, we must repeat, the contrast is startling. In the opinion of Latham, all the Slavonian population of modern Poland and Germany were already in their present sites in the days of Tiberius Cæsar; and, in fact, were spread over large tracts, which have since been more or less invaded by an *eastward* movement of the Germans. In his map, the entire basin from which the Elbe and the Saale are fed is Slavonian, and Germany is shut up to the *west* of this region. Between Bohemia and the Danube he does give to the Germans a narrow strip of land, as also the banks of the March, the Waag, and the Gran; but if they had no footing in Mecklenburg, Magdeburg, Saxony, Silesia, nor any where beyond the Elbe except at its very mouth, one wonders whence came the powerful Germans who overthrew the Roman empire, especially when we know how full of forest and swamp, and how thin of human population, was all western Germany. We should add, every thing south of the Mayn and of the Danube was occupied by a population foreign to Germany (Helvetian, Gaulish, Rhætian),

and was under Roman rule; so that at this corner also Baden, Wurtemberg, two-thirds of Bavaria, Styria, and the greater part of Austria, are agreed to have not been German at that time. Dr. Latham's Germany, in recent days, had the following population:

Dutch provinces . . . . .	2,600,000
Westphalia . . . . .	1,211,000
Rhenish Prussia . . . . .	2,168,000
One-third of Austria . . . . .	700,000
One-third of Bavaria . . . . .	1,400,000
Hanover . . . . .	1,550,000
The two Hesses . . . . .	1,419,000
Nassau . . . . .	370,000
	<hr/>
	11,418,000

If, therefore, we allow one to two millions for the same districts in the days of Tacitus, we are probably over the mark; since cattle were the principal sustenance of the Germans, agriculture was capricious and changing, town populations did not exist, and vast districts were kept desert by the policy of the strong tribes and the fears of the weaker. Indeed, it may reasonably be doubted whether Dr. Latham's Germany then contained one million inhabitants.

Jacob Grimm, on the other hand, not only includes in Germany all Bohemia, Thuringia, Saxony, Silesia, Mecklenburg, and Pomerania, but Poland and eastern Prussia, Galicia, and *probably* Lodomeria, Transylvania, Wallachia, and Moldavia. Moreover, with Tacitus, he sees over Denmark and Scandinavia a properly German people: nor only so, but in the far east he claims the Tyrigetæ on the Dniester, the Massagetæ on the Don (or on the Sir-deria!), as well as the Sacæ on the frontier of Bactria, as indirectly German; and indicates his strong suspicion that the Tectosagæ of Gaul and of Asia Minor were more German than Gaulish. In such views there does appear a strange greediness to exalt the outspread of the German people,—a people who had no common name or national consciousness of unity. The nucleus, however, of Grimm's novelties is found in his advocating as truth the doctrine of all the later Romans, and of the Gothic historians Cassiodorus and Jornandes, that the Goths and the Getæ are the same people and the same name. It will therefore conduce to clearness, if we first expound briefly the facts which here meet us.

Herodotus tells us of a people called Getæ, who lived in the north of "Thrace," that is, between the Balkan and the Danube; whom he calls the justest and the bravest of the Thracians, and whom he represents to be vehement believers in the immortality

of the soul. But in the time of Alexander the Great the chief strength of the Getæ is north of the Danube. An army of 10,000 foot and 4,000 horse tried to prevent his crossing that river, B.C. 335, but in vain. Though they were temporarily defeated by him, his successor Lysimachus, who endeavoured, in B.C. 292, to reach (it seems) the heart of their country, was surrounded, and forced to surrender with his army, in a vast region naturally deprived of water,\* which was then called "the wilderness of the Getans." Soon after this, the great Gaulish movement, which issued in the invasion of Greece and of Asia Minor, brought about a war of Gauls and Getans; in which it is said a great number of Getans were captured and sold as slaves into Greece, where they received two prevalent names—viz. Geta and *Davus*. And now first it comes out that Davi and Getæ are either exchangeable names, or two parts of the same great race. The Greeks in general called them all Getæ; from the Romans we hear the name *Daci* also. Strabo says that the western branch, toward Germany, is the Daci; the eastern, on the Black Sea, is Getæ. Under Augustus, Dacian and Getan wars begin; the same continued, on and off, until Trajan, having concentrated the entire forces of the empire against them for near five years together, at length totally subdued them, and reduced their country to the form of a Roman province. Its limits were great. The province reached from the Teiss to the Pruth, from the Danube to the Carpathians; and comprised Moldavia, the Bukovina, Transylvania, Hungary east of the Teiss, the Banat, and Wallachia. The best part of a century passes, and the province of Dacia is filled with Roman colonies, is Latinised and emasculated, like Roman Britain. In the reign of Antoninus Pius "the Germans and Dacians" rebelled, but were crushed again. At length, in the reign of Caracalla, it appears that Dacia is partly in possession of a people called Goths, who actively assail the Roman dominion, and are repelled by Caracalla.† Such is the account in Spartian. Dion Cassius has nothing of this in his book on Caracalla; but in a fragment of the next book he states that "the *Dacians*" ravaged some parts of Dacia, in order to recover the hostages which Caracalla had exacted of them. Since this historian elsewhere uses the terms Getæ and Daci as equivalent, we must suppose that he regarded the Goths of Spartian to be unconquered or revolting portions of the Dacian people. Alexander Severus found them most dangerous and persevering

\* This is supposed to be the steppe of Bessarabia.

† It was jocosely proposed to surname Caracalla *Geticus*, in allusion to his murder of his brother Geta. The witticism implies that the Goths (on this first appearance of their name in history) were at once popularly identified with the *Getæ*.

enemies, who spread their arms over all Dacia, which they had thoroughly conquered in the reign of Philip. The invaders (or insurgents?) are called Getæ, or Gothi, indifferently, by many writers of those days,—by Procopius, Capitolinus, Trebellius Pollio, Spartian, Vopiscus, Philostorgius, Augustin, Jerome (the most learned of all the fathers in languages and in ethnology), and by the Gothic bishop and abridger of history Jornandes. Many ancient writers called the Goths Scythians; not one, we believe, doubted their being the same people as the Getæ of Herodotus. The diversity of name between Getæ and Gothi, according to Grimm, is only what we ought to expect in passing from high German into a southern tongue; much as *kuni*, *muns*, *tunthus*, *hund*, become *genus*, *mens*, *dens*, *centum*. Further, Grimm urges,—when, three and four centuries before Christ, the Getæ were notoriously a powerful people on the Danube and Black Sea, it is too much to suppose the whole nation annihilated. Its south-western part was weakened by Trajan's conquest of Dacia; but apparently the north-east portion not only held its ground, but acquired fresh strength. We cannot believe that the Getans were entirely rooted up, and that the Goths exactly took their place,—spreading along the north of the Black Sea and to the Crimea, where we find such names as *Tyrigetæ* and *Massagetæ*.

Nevertheless all the learned men of modern times until Grimm forbid us to believe that the Goths are the old Getæ. Gibbon speaks of it as Gothic credulity. Crevier says on this subject (*Histoire des Empereurs*, xxiii.) that when the Goths first possessed themselves of part of Dacia, “the Romans knew them so little, that they called them Getæ, from the name of the people who occupied the country anciently.” Yet he clearly does not himself believe that they came from Sweden. In a very recent work, dated July 1853 (*Smith's Dictionary of Greek and Roman Geography*), the learned writer, E. B. J., five years after Grimm's great work had appeared, did not hesitate to say (under DACIA): “*It need hardly be added, that the theory which regarded the Getæ and the long-haired Goths of Scandinavia as equivalent names is entirely void of foundation.*”

On matters so delicate we dare not utter any thing dogmatic; but the dogmatism of learned writers does surprise us. Why call this identification a *theory*, when every ancient writer makes it a *fact*? We grant, that what men think to be facts are not so always; but we submit that the modern view which contradicts them is, even if correct, still a theory. Well: what is the ground of this great confidence of the moderns against the identification of Goths and Getans? It rests on the following argument: “The Goths were notoriously Germans;

the Getans were notoriously Thracians : but the Thracians cannot have been Germans ; therefore neither were the Goths Getans."

On this it is to be remarked : 1. That when ancient writers associate the Getans with Thracians, it need not indicate more than their intimate political relations ; in fact, we know that the Getans south of the Danube were at one time conquered by the Odrysan dynasty of Thrace. 2. When Herodotus says that, except the Indians, the Thracians are the greatest nation known to the Greeks, it is manifest that he extended the word Thracian very widely ; just as did later writers extend the word Scythian, which Herodotus confines to the Scoloti. 3. No ancient author but Strabo says that the Getans and the Thracians had the same language. If such a writer as Jacob Grimm holds that the word of Strabo as to the identity of the language is insufficient to outweigh other probabilities, he certainly seems to deserve a respectful refutation, and not the cool contempt of E. B. J. 4. It is far from clear that the Gothic language could have been understood by a native of Germany in the days of Tacitus the historian, or of Tacitus the emperor. Grimm testifies to the strong diversity of the tongues ; nor are we aware that the ancients by any means identified Goths and Germans as the moderns do. Perhaps if the Getan and the Thracian languages differed only as much as the Gothic and the German, the facility with which a Getan would understand a large part of the Thracian tongue may have been a sufficient foundation for Strabo's statement. It does seem to be resting too much upon it, if, for this sole reason, we are required to disbelieve the universal and absolutely unanimous agreement of the ancients that the Goths were the Getæ. As to the opinion of Crevier (which Dr. Latham has adopted), that a German people, not previously called Goths, received this name (Gothi or Getæ) from the nation whose land they conquered,—it would have plausibility if they had been called Goths by the Romans only ; but very little indeed, when we find it was the name by which they called themselves. On the whole, the opinion of Grimm seems *primâ facie* sober, and not contradicted by any known facts and testimonies, that the old German, the Gothic or Getan, the Dacian, the Thracian, the Macedonian languages, were a series of which no two were identical, and the extremes very remote ; yet the whole so related, that no great chasm existed between the nearer links. We may quote his general result, p. 799 :

"The German language lies between Greek, Latin, and Keltic, on the one side, and Slavonian, Lithuanian, Finnish, on the other ; and is related to each of these, though in different degrees of nearness. But since Slavonians and Lithuanians do not reach to Greece, there would



be a gap in the chain of nations, were it not closed by Thrace, which is linked to Greece by Macedonia, and to Germany and Sarmatia by Dacia and Getica."

Undoubtedly Grimm plunges into a sea of uncertainty (nor do we intend to plunge after him), when he proceeds to use his vast learning and ingenuity to trace the double family of *Daci-ans* and *Getans*, in the far west and far east alike, by mere similarities of names. According to him, *Dani* means *Dacini*; so the Danes and Goths of Denmark and Sweden are Dacians and Getans. Indeed (he urges) Ptolemy expressly places the *Gouti* and *Dauciones* on his insular Scandinavia. From the tenth to the thirteenth century Latin writers used to say *Dacus*, *Dacia*, for Dane, Denmark; while to this day the Lapps call a Dane *Dazh*; and the Russians say *Dattschanin*, *Datskoe*, for the Danish people and language. When he proceeds to quote Servius, who says that the Danes are called from the Dahæ of the Caspian, and shows that he believes it, and claims the Sacæ of Independent Tartary as Germans, he certainly lowers our confidence in him as a safe guide.

Let us come back to Germany proper. According to Pliny, there were five classes of Germans: 1. the Vindili, beyond the Elbe; 2. the Ingævones, or people of the sea-coast and islands—the greatest of the "islands" being Sweden and Norway; 3. the Istævones, or inhabitants of the basin of the Rhine; 4. the Hermiones, or interior Germans of the highland; 5. the Bastarnæ, along the limits of Dacia, branches of whom touched the Black Sea, at the mouths of the Danube and Dniester. It is remarkable that Tacitus (in a passage quite inconsistent with the general tenor of his treatise) makes the second, third, and fourth branches of Pliny to be the *only* true Germans; and alone to be descended from "Mannus," the old German Adam. We think it a fair inference, that the population west of the Elbe talked a language peculiar to itself, and felt something decidedly *foreign* in the Vindili and Bastarnæ: how great the chasm, remains uncertain. But it is a signal rebuke to our linguistic attainments, that though the words Ingævones, Istævones, Hermiones, so clearly meant *sea-coasters*, *river-sidemen*, and *highlanders*, the German tongue, as now known, does not suffice for the explanation. The Vindili, or Pliny's first branch, are regarded by Dr. Latham as wholly un-German, being either old Prussian (*i. e.* Lettish) or Lithuanian, or Polish; especially the Lygii of Tacitus, on or about the Vistula, with much ingenuity he maintains to be (name and people) the same as the modern *Lekhs*, *i. e.* Poles; and though the earliest mention of the Lekhs is less\* favourable

\* The Lygii invaded Gaul in the reign of the Emperor Probus, by whom they were repulsed; after which their name disappears from history, unless the *Lechs*

to his view than he represents it, we are disposed to acquiesce in this result until disproved. In fact, the argument is similar to that of Grimm about the Goths and Getæ. The names (Lygii and Lekh) are about as like. We have no evidence that the older people was destroyed\* or migrated; hence the presumption is, that the newer are the descendants of the older.

But Latham goes further. The Gothones of Tacitus (Guttones of Pliny), in east Prussia,—who are by nearly all other writers unceremoniously accepted as Goths, from similarity of name,—he maintains to have been “old” Prussians, of Lettish stock. Indeed Ptolemy, who as an astronomer is eminently precise in his statements, calls them *Sarmatians*. Latham ingeniously adduces, that in quite modern times the country people round Königsberg were reproached by the German population as Pagans, under the name *Gudda*. This subject is curious enough to deserve closer attention, as many of our readers may scarcely know who the “old Prussians” are. We will here give a condensed extract from Prichard’s great work, vol. iii. p. 451: “The old Prussians, the Prutheni or Pruzii, had a peculiar system of religion and a hierarchy, which distinguishes them both from the Slavic and from the Germanic† nations. Of all Europeans, they made the most obstinate resistance to Christianity—in part, it would appear, from the influence of their priests, who were governed by a pontiff,—at once legislator, supreme judge, and high-priest. His station has been compared to that of the grand lama of Thibet. Monkish writers called him the *pope* of the northern pagans. He lived retired in a dark forest, and was approached only by priests and priestesses, who interpreted his will to the profane laity.”

The Teutonic knights of Prussia dedicated their arms to the task of extirpating the paganism of that region; but at the era of the Reformation the work was not complete. Dr. Latham informs us that Prætorius, a Pole, writing (A.D. 1688) a book called *Orbis Gothicus*, devoted a section to answer the question, “Why is the name *Gudda* a word of contempt in Prussia?” and his reply virtually is, that *Gudda* was the name of the old Pagans of that country: “Guddarum infidelium nomen existit, adeo ut

be the same; but of these we do not learn till the sixth or seventh century after Christ. This is the weak side of Dr. Latham’s theory.

\* Gibbon, chap. xii., supposes that the *power* of the nation was broken by the great defeat it received from Probus, and that the name vanished in consequence. It is evident in Tacitus, that Lygian was the name of a confederacy, as well as of a tribe; and the tribe may have remained obscure to history for several centuries, until it reappeared (in the same country) with the name Lech.

† Should not this be limited to the later ages? The German Semnonæ of Tacitus had a mysterious and sanguinary cultus; so had the Herodotean Scythians, whom Prichard holds to have been Slavonian. The temptation to intensify these supposed distinctions of races is great.

*Gothus* sive *Guddus* idem iis, qui Paganus et Ethnicus hostisque Christianitatis audicrit." This passage is doubly remarkable, as coming from one who had no theory to serve. First, it identifies the ancient Gothones of those parts with the modern Gudda (for *-ones* is notoriously added at pleasure instead of *-i* in these national names); secondly, it identifies the Gudda with the old Prussian paganism. But Dr. Latham has another striking quotation to the same effect from a modern historian of the Lithuanians: "Sunt autem Pollexiani *Getharum seu Prussorum genus*"—where *Gethæ* must be the people called *Gothi* by Prætorius above, and *Gothones* by Tacitus. The recurrence of the element "Goth" in so many forms is not as yet satisfactorily explained (as far as we see) by any hypothesis. There is another people in south-eastern Germany called *Gothini* by Tacitus, who, he says, talked a Gaulish tongue,\* and were in vassalage. Latham asserts that they were not *Gauls*, but *Gallicians*. The similarity of name to Goth (riddle as it is) warns us not to trust on mere name that the Gothones were Goths; and somewhat aids our acquiescence in Latham's bold theory (which in all other respects is satisfactory) that the Gothones were the progenitors of the old Prussians.

Three principal languages of this stock survive to modern knowledge—the Lettish, the old Prussian (now a dead language), and the Lithuanian. Of these the Lithuanian retains its ancient words and forms in the highest perfection. The Lettish is extremely interfused with German vocables, and has lost its inflexions nearly as English has. The old Prussian is judged to be intermediate in these respects between the Lettish and the Lithuanian. From want of a generic name, we entitle all the languages and peoples of this group, collectively, *Lithuanian*; and the result of Dr. Latham's argument, if acquiesced in, is, that already in the times of Tacitus east Prussia was inhabited by a Lithuanian population. He supposes it (with its name *Goth*) to have been diffused into Sweden also, where the *name* Gothland remained, after the population of Lithuanic Goths had been overwhelmed and merged in other races.

\* We cannot understand the stubborn incredulity of so many learned men as to Gaulish races on German soil, when it is universally admitted that the region immediately north of Greece had many powerful Gaulish tribes, who at length invaded Greece itself. The Gaulish Boii, in Germany, are also notorious, and they were perhaps the last to be subjugated by the Germans. Grimm, with his usual zeal for Germanic population, arbitrarily rejects this testimony of Tacitus concerning the *Gothini*, and claims them as Goths. The statement of their vassalage, equally as of their foreign tongue, is too pointed for us to disbelieve. We think the *serfs* in old Germany were probably conquered Gauls, who in most districts lost their language: but in the mountainous regions of Germany, though forced to political vassalage, they occasionally kept their tongue, and were thus known to the Romans as foreign to the Germans.

In passing we will make a query; for we dare not make more, in our ignorance of the Lithuanian and Mæso-Gothic tongues. We believe it is admitted that Lithuanian is of all European tongues the nearest to Sanscrit; and we have read the assertion that Mæso-Gothic is nearer to Sanscrit than Anglo-Saxon to English. We would ask, has it been duly investigated whether, making allowance for possible diversity between the modern and the ancient Lithuanian tongue, it is absurd, *on the ground of language*, to identify the progenitors of the Lithuanians with the western Goths? If this would *not* be absurd, we should be able at once to account the Gothones or Guttones of east Prussia to be both Lithuanians and Goths.

We may here warn the reader that the discrimination of the Lithuanian tongues is a discovery of very modern times; and among the ancients nothing of the kind is to be looked for. Under the word *Sarmatian* their most accurate and widely-informed writers of necessity confounded at least three very different stocks of population: 1. the Slavonic (Poles, Serbs, Slovacks, Russians, &c.); 2. the Ugrian (Magyars, Finns, Huns, &c.); 3. the Lithuanian. In short, the inaccessibility of the vast plain of north-eastern Europe forced them to comprise all its population under the vague name Sarmatian or Scythian.

That in the earliest times the country east of the Elbe was inhabited by a Slavonian, not a German, population, is argued by Latham from the names of the places (p. xxviii.): "*Saxon* as is England, the oldest geographical terms are *Keltic*; some of the original names of the rivers and mountains remaining unchanged. The converse is the case in Transalbingian Germany: the older the name, the more surely it is Slavonic."

We do not propose to follow Dr. Latham in his discussion whether the Vandals are really Venedi (or Wends)—which would bring on a fresh question, whether these are Lithuanian or Slavonian. It suffices to say, that his argument (to our mind) shows the received notion of the Vandals being proper Germans to rest on so extremely slight evidence,\* that, as soon as any one is convinced that several branches of Pliny's *Vindili* are un-German, the chances are that he will believe the same of the Vandals. On the whole, we think Dr. Latham has struck a hard blow against the belief that the ancient inhabitants of the *north-east* of Germany—*i. e.* Pomerania and Poland—can be rightly entitled German. We are disposed to give up to him

\* Such evidence, as that a king of the Vandals is called *Gensenrich*, proves very little to one who remembers how often Saxon and Irish people have had Norman chieftains; and moreover, that if *rich* is German for "king," so is *rex* Latin, and *righ* Irish. The vocable must have been common to very many languages. It is notoriously the Indian *rajah*.

Pliny's *first* branch entire; but when we approach the *fifth* branch, we more readily go along with Grimm, and accept the Bastarnæ and Getæ as, if not purely German, yet certainly Germanic. This is, indeed, nearly the view taken of the Bastarnæ by Strabo and Tacitus. Strabo does not call the Bastarnæ outright "Germans," but says of them—"being themselves also *nearly* (σχεδόν τι) of German race;" the cautious tone of which seems to imply close inquiry. So Tacitus doubts whether to account the Peucini Germans or Sarmatians, and adds: "though the Peucini, whom some call Bastarnæ, in language, mode of life, situation,\* and the nature of their houses, live as Germans (*ut Germani agunt*)." The ground of his hesitation was, that through the intermarriages of their nobles they had contracted something of Sarmatian degradation; yet on the whole he concludes them to be German. His testimony to their German *language* is very striking, when he has marked out the Gothini, the Osi, and the Æstyī (on German soil), as *not* German in language. At the same time, in this general question, we are disposed to give some weight to other circumstances, which, if they cannot in themselves prove any thing, yet in combination may reinforce a part of Grimm's Geto-Gothic doctrine.

First, we observe that the *names* of the Danube, the Dniester, the Dnieper, the Tanais (or Don), and Donetz, have sensibly something in common. In fact, Dnieper (Danapris) and Danubius are so alike, that Jornandes says Danubius for Danapris. *Dan* seems to be a common element; and it is surely probable that the names were given by a people speaking the same language. Again, the Dniester (Danaster) has for its second element *Ister*, the old Greek name for the Danube, which name belonged to the confessedly *Getic* era; as indeed also the names Danubius and Tanais are far too old to be ascribed to the Goths by those who teach that the Goths *displaced* the Getæ. The Dniester was called Tyras, and the Dnieper Borysthenes, by the classical writers; and we cannot find any account of the change of name, except that it seems to mark *Gothic influence* on the Roman nomenclature; that is, we seem to have a right to infer that the Goths of those parts so called the rivers. The Scythia of Herodotus (*i.e.* the northern basin of the Black Sea) was ruled over and roamed over by a people whose true name (he says) was Scoloti. But he not only broadly distinguishes the agricultural Scythians of Podolia and of Kharkov from the roaming people, but speaks in particular of the Budini (apparently on the Don

\* "Situation" (*sede*) must refer to those who were in contact with Germany—perhaps in the Little Carpathians, a district which he would regard as German. Latham thinks to refute Tacitus out of his own mouth, by this word *sede*. Surely not successfully.

or Volga) as a nation with grey eyes and red hair,\*—qualities regarded by the ancients as emphatically German, and clearly, in his view, un-Scythian. “When you have seen one Scythian,” says he, “you have seen all.” The Budini and Geloni dwelt together in a vast wooden city; and, according to him, the Geloni were the descendants of Greek colonists, who had introduced Greek religion and arts.

We cannot think it a far-fetched hypothesis that the fixed and agricultural population of the Herodotean Scythia was the nucleus whence the later Goths of those parts descended. This is not even a deviation from the account of Cassiodorus in Jordanes; for the *eastward* migration of the Goths from Sweden, in which he believed, was placed by him long before the time of Cyrus the Great. We do not now move the question, whether the Goths of the Ukraine and of the Crimea came thither from the *west*, or from the *east*; we merely mark the high probability that they were already in the interior of Scythia in the days of Herodotus. Nothing can be more natural, or more reasonably to be expected, than that an agricultural population in the highly fertile soil of Podolia and Kharkov,—if once it so take root (by good-will or by its own strength) as to develop itself side by side with the roaming tribes,—should outgrow them in numbers, intelligence, and resources; more especially since Herodotus is careful to inform us that the Scythians of Podolia raised corn, not merely for food, but *for exportation*—a clear mark of social advance. Also the Callippidæ and Alazones between the Boug and the Dnieper raised vegetables as well as corn; and in his view the Callippidæ, as well as the Geloni, were of Greek origin; though, while bringing to Scythia Greek arts, they had adopted Scythian manners themselves. Our present and provisional opinion is, that the Goths of the Ukraine and of the Bosphorus are the children of Herodotus’s agricultural Scythians,† and perhaps of his Budini; and that such words as Don, Danapr, Danaster, Ister, Danube, all belong to their ancient language; while Tyras was perhaps the Scythian (Scolotan) name of the Dniester.

One who has gone with us thus far, and who remembers that Europe, in rather late days, has been peopled from the east, will perhaps take one more step in our company—*i. e.* he will think it probable that the Goths of the Ukraine and Bosphorus repre-

\* We unhesitatingly so understand his statement, *γλαυκόν τε τῶν ἰσχυρῶς ἐστὶ καὶ πυρρόν*. A man must have a hypothesis to serve, before he will interpret Herodotus to mean that the Budini *painted themselves* grey and red.

† It is no objection, that Herodotus makes no remark on the physical aspect of the agricultural Scythians, as he does on that of the Budini; for the Budini seem to have been particularly known, because they lay in the track of the Greek merchants who travelled towards the Ural mountains for gold. His notion also that the Callippidæ were of Greek extraction implies that their aspect was not that of Scythians.

sent the Gothic element in its *westward*, rather than in an *eastward*, movement; and, in short, that the forefathers of these Goths had never been in Germany. We do not hereby intend to lay down that no German people has moved eastward: in fact, there is pretty clear evidence that the Bastarnæ migrated in that direction. When first named in history (in the Roman wars with Philip and Perseus), they appear in the Little Carpathians, from the March to the Theiss. Afterward a part of them is found in the delta of the Danube, and in Bulgaria; and the later geographers place the Bastarnæ between the Dniester and Dnieper. If the Goths, overpowering the Scythians, moved down toward the sea-coast, the Bastarnæ may have filled parts vacated by them. But although partial migrations in this direction are imaginable, it is a violent hypothesis, and directly contradicted by Gothic historians, that the great Gothic nation came out of Germany *after* the classical era of Rome, moved in mass as far east as the Crimea, and then recommenced migrations westward.

At the same time, we may add that the relations of the Goths of the S.E. to Germany are likely to have been by the course of the Danube. All agree that the Gothic tongue is eminently *high* German; and the high German is the language of *southern* Germany, but the low German that of maritime Germany,—as the very words ‘low’ and ‘high’ express. If, then, the connection of the Goths of the Black Sea was closer with southern than with northern Germany, the probability is that the Danube was the high road of connection. Again, all the tribes, as far as we are aware, whose migrations were between the Black Sea and the Baltic, had the equestrian habits which the Romans characterised as Sarmatian,—a result almost inevitable where the keep of a horse costs nothing, and where a pastoral nation must perpetually shift its grazing-grounds; and as the Goths were not an equestrian people, it is not likely that they ever lived long in Sarmatia, except as agricultural settlers and river-sailors. It was in small river-boats that they swarmed across the Black Sea, to the amazement of the Romans. We may add, that the Goths and the southern Germans were more monarchical than the other\* Germans,—another point of connection.

When we attempt to follow Dr. Latham into the details of his German races, we find in him, as usual, much fertility of combination and freshness of thought; but we cannot often feel confidence in his novelties, most of which indeed seem to us gratuitous, highly unpalatable, or even false. Such are his notions that the Suevi of Tacitus *end* where those of Cæsar begin;

\* We ought to add,—*except* the Gothones, who had constitutional monarchy like the historical Goths.

that Suevi is the same word as Sorbi or Servians; that most of the Suevi—even the Semnones—were Slavonic; that the Gothini were Gallicians (in the modern sense); that the Bohemia of Maroboduus was Bavaria; that nothing at all is to be believed about Cimbri in Jutland and Denmark; and that it is an open question whether the Cimbri were not Slavonians (p. 135); that Chatti and Suevi\* are different names for the same people (p. xlix. of *Prolegomena*); that Suevi merely means “non-Celtic;” that migrations were so rare and difficult, that we must not have recourse to this topic to explain the changes of the map of Germany at different eras (pp. xxx. xxxi.). In a less learned or less energetic writer we should pass by such an opinion as the last, without thinking it to deserve refutation. It is in compliment to Dr. Latham that we now reason against it.

He himself admits a migration of the Goths, with wives and families, from Germany to the Crimea, and from the coasts of the Black Sea and Danube into Italy and Spain. He entitles the Goths the most migratory of the Germans. But surely if the Goths could migrate on such a scale, other tribes might move through a quarter or a tenth part of the distance; and when we have distinct and positive declarations by the first writers of antiquity that this was their habit, it is highly unreasonable to be incredulous. Indeed, the evidence in this matter—analogue, collateral, and direct, *à priori* and *à posteriori*—is quite overwhelming. We find facilities for migration, motives for it, compulsion enforcing it, and multiplied evidence of the fact. Of course, while men live by cattle and by game, they have little attachment to the soil. Strabo on this point says (vii. 1, p. 64 of Tauchnitz): “What is common to all the people of this country (Germany) is, the ease of migration, by reason of the simplicity of their living, and their not tilling the ground nor laying up treasures, but dwelling in huts which contain provision for the day. The chief part of their substance is tame cattle, as with the Nomades; so that, imitating them, and putting their household substance on waggons, they turn with their herds whithersoever they please.” That “they give no care to agriculture, live on milk, cheese, and flesh, and have no fixed private rights in land,” is attested by Cæsar (*De Bello Gallico*, vi. 22); who also mentions, with all detail, the case of two tribes (the Usipetes and Tenctheri), who were driven† across the Rhine in vast multitudes

\* This appears to be a needlessly paradoxical form of statement. If Ariovistus, a Suevian, extended his power westward to the Rhine, and invaded Gaul, embracing the Chatti in his league, this does not imply any displacement of the centre of Suevian power, or that the name Suevian has a new meaning.

† Though unable to defend themselves against the Suevi, they were able to overpower the Gauls. This is so attested by Cæsar, as to be proof against Latham’s sarcasm, that the best qualification for invading one’s neighbour’s land, according to some historians, is inability to defend one’s own.



by the Suevi systematically ravaging their fields. Moreover, he tells us that the Suevi followed this method of ravage on *principle*, since they "regarded it as the greatest of public honours to have as large a desert as possible round them." Migration must therefore often have been *enforced*. Indeed several cases are known in which whole tribes have changed their abode to escape the danger of enslavement by the Roman arms. Dr. Latham complains that writers confound mere movements of German *armies* with *migrations*, and forget that unless men carry the females and children with them, it does not deserve the latter name. But on this we may remark—1. that mere armies of men often suffice to carry the name of the nation, and affect the aspect of the map—as the Saxons in Britain, and the Normans in France; 2. that the Cimbri subdued by Marius had large numbers of women in their waggons; so had the Goths defeated by Claudius (Gibbon, ch. xi.). Moreover, the movement of the Gauls into Greece and into Asia Minor was not only a most sudden and rapid event, but is attested (at least as to Asia Minor) to have been a real national migration, by the purity of the language and race in later times. Upon this also Dr. Latham chooses to throw doubt, without one particle of evidence.

His mode of dealing with Bohemia and the Cimbri appears to us to deserve a rather vehement protest. In regard to Bohemia, the testimony of the ancients is perspicuous, positive, and consistent. Tacitus evidently thinks it needless to dwell on what was notorious, and rather alludes than asserts. Velleius Paterculus, who had marched with the army of Tiberius to the Elbe, and remained some years in Germany, is an eminently valid authority as to the events within those limits of space and time; and he, in describing the proceedings of Maroboduus, says that he *fled into the interior* to escape the notice of the Romans, and conquered Bohemia, within the depths of the Hercynian forest. But Dr. Latham (following, we believe, an eccentric Bavarian\* author) would persuade us that this *meant* the modern Bavaria! Why, of Bavaria, the southern half was contained in the Roman province of Rætia; what remained of it was so far from being an interior and secluded district, that it was immediately on the Roman frontier, and pervaded by Roman influences. In the days of Tacitus it was occupied by the Hermunduri, to whom (says the historian) "we freely open our homes and our villas, without exciting their covetousness. They cross the Danube

\* During the great Napoleonic wars, Bavaria sided with France; and, to justify her unnatural treason to the cause of Germany, rejoiced to believe herself more Gaulish than German in blood. It might have sufficed for this to recall the fact that old Rætia was Celtic; but the *name* of Bavaria (Boiaria) gave an impetus to the doctrine that Bavarians are *Boii*, and may be identified with Bohemia.

without passports or guards, and enter our most splendid Rætian colony," &c. And while writing thus, he simultaneously alludes to Bohemia, without a hint that the old kingdom of Maroboduus is not this Bohemia, but is the district now occupied by the Hermunduri. In fact, Velleius is far from indefinite in his description of the site of Bohemia. "It had Germany," says he (ii. 109), "at its left and in front, Pannonia at its right, Noricum at its back;" and he represents Tiberius Cæsar as invading it from Carnuntum, "which place of Noricum was nearest to the kingdom (of Maroboduus) on this side." Carnuntum was on the Danube, a little above the modern Presburg; which makes it clear that our Bohemia was the Bohemia of Velleius. Dr. Latham makes it an objection, that none of the ancients describe the mountains of Bohemia. How *could* they describe a locality into which Maroboduus betook himself to avoid their sight? Velleius speaks of it as girt with the Hercynian forest; surely that is enough. Tacitus says that a continuous chain of mountains cleaves Suevia apart (by which he must mean the chain which forms the northern side of Bohemia); but he clearly did not know enough of the geography to specify it more distinctly.

As to the Cimbri, Dr. Latham has indeed brought out a most impotent result. After reprinting an essay, in which he maintains that every thing hitherto believed about the Cimbri is uncertain, and that the ancients knew nothing about them, and pushed them always to the utmost bounds of known geography, —the Cimbri being among races what Thule was among islands, a name for the distant unknown,—he adds the following post-script:

"Some change in my opinion concerning the populations in question, since the publication of the preceding paper, has taken place. The conflicting difficulties have increased with the increase of the attention that has been bestowed on the subject. Hence I modify the last proposition, and hesitate to commit myself to the doctrine that the Cimbro-Teutons were Gauls at all; *what they were being a greater mystery than ever.*"

This oracle is delivered without assigning any reasons for his change of mind, and without indicating *which* of his former arguments now appear to him unsatisfactory. Nor is this the worst. So very hasty is he, as to fall into blundering self-contradiction, which is made the less excusable by his tone of confidence. In p. 134 (of his later and *improved* view!) he writes concerning the "Cimbri, Tigurini, Ambrones, Teutones":

"What did Cæsar consider their ethnological affinities to be? Gallic. Sallust? Gallic. Velleius Paternulus? Gallic. It is only the later writers that carry their origin north of Gaul."

Velleius considers them to be *Gallic*, says Latham! Yet, in p. clvii. he himself writes :

“Velleius Paterculus places them [the Cimbri] beyond the Rhine, and deals with them as *Germans* : ‘Tum Cimbri et Teutoni transcendere Rhenum . . .’ (ii. 8). ‘Effusa immanis vis Germanarum gentium, quibus nomen Cimbris<sup>ac</sup> Teutonis erat’ (ii. 12).”

So much for Velleius. As for Cæsar, Dr. Latham is consistent with himself, but consistent in error. In p. clvi. (his old essay) he had written :

“Cæsar, whose evidence ought to be conclusive—inasmuch as he knew of Germany as well as Gaul—fixes them [the Cimbri] to the south of the Marne and Seine. This we learn, not from the direct text, but from inference. ‘Gallos a Belgis Matrona et Sequana dividit. . . . Belgas solos esse, qui patrum nostrum memoria, omni Gallia vexata, Teutones Cimbroque intra fines suos ingredi prohibuerint.’ Now if the Teutones and Cimbri had moved from north to south, they would have clashed with the Belgæ *first*, and with the other Gauls *afterwards*. The converse, however, was the fact.”

We will not discuss whether this overstrains the necessary force of the past participle “vexata;” we do believe that Cæsar intended to represent the Cimbri as attacking the Belgians *from the south*. Niebuhr, who follows Plutarch and Appian in bringing the Cimbri through Thrace and along the Danube into Noricum, whence they cross the Rhine far south of the Belgians, no doubt agreed with Latham in so interpreting this passage. But how does this “fix” the earlier home of the Cimbri to Gaul and its south? How does this indicate that “Cæsar considers their ethnological affinities to be Gallic”? On the contrary, in the *Gallic War* (i. 40), Cæsar tells his centurions, when about to engage the German Ariovistus, that “this enemy” (the German) was already tried by the Romans in the defeat of the Cimbri and Teutones, and of the army of Spartacus. Similarly, in i. 33, he compares the invasion of Gaul by Ariovistus from Germany to that of the Cimbri and Teutones. Dr. Latham overlooks these notices, and distorts a third.

Yet we do not account these definite errors so hurtful as the general confusion which he has thrown over the subject. Two points concerning these invaders we hold to be clear; a third and fourth far more doubtful; but he has treated them all together, and has unjustifiably tampered with ancient testimony, equalising the best with the worst. It seems to us not useless to mark these things more distinctly.

*First*, then, it ought not for a moment to be questioned that there was a tribe called Cimbri living in Jutland. The armies of Augustus, accompanied by a fleet, traversed Germany from

the Rhine to the Elbe; so, indeed, did Germanicus, in the beginning of Tiberius's reign. Strabo (vii. 1, p. 70, Tauchnitz) says: "The northern Germans reach along the ocean; and *they are known* from the mouths of the Rhine as far as the Elbe. *And of these the best known are the Sugambrians and the Cimbrians.*"\* But what is beyond the Elbe, along the coast of the ocean, *is utterly unknown* to us." Here we find limited and cautious assertion, his means of knowledge being exactly defined by the progress of the Roman armies. His absolute disclaimer of knowledge beyond the Elbe gives weight to his assertions as to this side; and his positive statement concerning the Cimbrians is confirmed by Tacitus. This passage is quoted from Strabo by Latham, and set aside. Why? Simply because Ptolemy, writing one hundred and twenty years later, puts the Cimbri in the *northern* part of Denmark!—as if the tribe (already exceedingly weakened, as Tacitus states) could not have been driven northward, or its southern part have been swallowed up, by more powerful neighbours. As if to show how defiant of reason he can be, he further quotes from the *Monumentum Ancyranum* the reference of the Emperor Augustus to the Cimbri. The whole passage stands thus: "The Roman fleet sailed from the mouth of the Rhine toward the east, so far as no Roman previously had ever gone by land or sea. And the *Cimbri*, the Charudes, and the Semnonēs, *other German tribes of the same region*, sought my friendship." Nor do we find anything, with Dr. Latham, absurd or confused in Pliny's testimony, who says that Mount Sevo, or the great Norway range, "makes a vast bend to the Cimbric promontory,"—the entrance of the Baltic being so narrow, that the opposite lands seem to point at one another. The phrase "quorum pars Cimbri" seems, indeed, to be wrongly repeated in Pliny's text; but if otherwise, it will only imply that in his belief the Cimbri were partly in one, partly in another district of Germany. This has nothing in it confused nor absurd; but it certainly is not in agreement with other authorities.

*Secondly*; whatever the race or home of the Cimbri and Teutones, we first learn of them as marauding in Illyria and Noricum, and next in southern Gaul. Hence, *whatever their race, and whatever their recent home*, it is to be received, until disproved, that they crossed the Rhine (if at all) very high up, and appeared among the Sequani first of Gaul. This also agrees with the mention of the Tigurini as their allies, since the Tigurini are identified with Zurich.

*Thirdly*; to what race the Cimbri belonged, and to what the

\* Latham, commenting on this very passage, is pleased to say (p. clxii.), that the Sicambri and the Cimbri are *confounded* by Strabo! If this is confusion, what would distinction be?

Teutones,\* is a very vexed question, supported ably and reasonably from opposite sides. Ancient writers, who call them Germans, may have only intended to say that they came from Germany. On the other hand, Cicero and Sallust, who call them Gauls, may have done so because the name of German was hardly yet known, and *all* northern people were regarded as Gauls, as in Greece they were vaguely named Scythians. We perceive that the learned Dr. Leonhard Schmitz, in his article on the Cimbri in Smith's *Geographical Dictionary*, accedes decidedly to what we have been accustomed to regard as the English view,—that is, the old-fashioned belief that they were Celtic. He also identifies the word with the Welsh national name *Kymry*, which we familiarly know in *Cambria* and *Cumberland*. This, we suppose, is inevitable with those who regard them as Celts; yet, as we shall presently say, it might lead them to take one step further. But we must first give prominence to an argument concerning the language of the Cimbri, in which Dr. Latham shows how very ingenious and how very bold he can be. Pliny, in discussing the geography of the Baltic coast and Jutland, tells us that Hecataeus calls the Baltic *Amalchius*, a name which, in the Scythian tongue, signifies Frozen; but that according to Philemon, the Cimbrians call it *Morimarus*, that is, Dead Sea. On this Prichard has made a remark, which, superadded to all the rest, appeared to settle the fact of the *Cimbri* talking the language of the *Kymri*, or modern Welsh—namely, that *Môr-marw* in Welsh means Dead Sea;—"a meaning," says Dr. P., "which does not belong, I believe, to similar vocables in any German dialect." To this Latham replies, that Pliny has probably mistaken Cimmerians for Cimbrians, since the Greek Philemon is not likely to have written about the Baltic; that the Baltic could not be called a dead sea [though liable to be frozen], but the Sea of Azof and Putrid Sea notoriously can; that if *Morimarus* is good Welsh, it is also good Slavonic in the very same sense, and perhaps is found again in the Sea of *Marmora*. In short, therefore, it was not the name given by Welsh Cimbri to the Baltic, but the name given by Slavonic Cimmerii to the *Palus Mæotis*.

*Fourthly*; it is not to be thrown out of sight that Appian and Diodorus distinctly entitle the Gauls who invaded Greece "Cimbrians;" and with Plutarch, Justin, and Strabo, they represent the Cimbrian invasion of Gaul to have come up the Drave.

\* The modern use of "Teutonic" for Theodisc or Deutsch, as a collective name for all the Germans, is rightly esteemed delusive by Latham. *Teutones* with the Romans was the name of one sharply-defined tribe, whose relation to other tribes of Germany, Switzerland, Gaul, or Illyria, is left obscure. It is difficult to believe that the other Germans would call *one* small tribe of themselves emphatically *Teut*, "The People."

In narrating, indeed, the earlier course of the movement, it is evident that mere theory guided them : the name of the Cimmerii deluding some, and the known seat of the Cimbri in Jutland biasing others. But that Illyricum and Mœsia were the scene of their marauding expeditions before they met the Roman arms in Noricum, is stated with too many circumstances to be wholly rejected. Hence those who believe that the name Cimbri was spread over all Britain as well as Jutland, cannot justly be incredulous as to the name belonging equally to the powerful Gaulish tribes on the north of Greece and Illyria ; and if so, it appears an open question whether the Marian Cimbri did not come from Upper Mœsia, or Pannonia. The feeble tribe of Cimbrians in Denmark, surrounded by Germans, may have learnt the German tongue, and have thus been accounted German by the Romans, and yet be pleased to boast of the great deeds of the Cimbrian invasion as its own.

It is time to endeavour to sum up. What, on the whole, do we seem to learn as to the tribes of ancient Germany ?

We find a people,—then, as now,—on the whole homogeneous and conscious of unity, yet having no fixed political centres, and no uniformity of political system. The more eastern was the tribe, the more decidedly was it monarchical. The Goths, on Scythian soil, had defined dynastic races, like Scythians and Persians. The Gothones in Prussia (whatever their race) had also a constitutional royalty ; so had the Getæ and Dacians. Less methodised and fixed was the royalty of the Quadi in the south-east of Germany, and of the Suevi, the greatest of the confederations, which stretched from the south-west diagonally over half of Germany. Descending from the highlands to the banks of the Rhine or shores of the German ocean, we pass from royalty into republicanism—with a strong inclination indeed to revere the offspring of great men, but not so as to hinder the rise of plebeian merit. Already there must have been not only the great distinction of German and Dane, but also deeply marked dialects, such as come to their extreme in the Frisian and Dutch at one end, in the Swiss and Austrian at the other. In the republican part of the country, the confederacies themselves, and not only their centres, were constantly shifting. At one time Ariovistus the Suevian is the formidable power, chief of a very motley host, not the proper Suevian league ; afterwards the Sugambri ; then the Cheruskans ; then the Chatti ; later, again, the Alemanni and the Franks. No one of these confederacies at all spreads over the same tribes as another, but varies, just as in Greece an Athenian, a Theban, a Thessalian, an Achaian league. On the other hand, the Suevian confederacy had far greater permanence, and is in some respects comparable

to the middle-age German empire. It is generally governed by a king; and between the era of Augustus and Trajan, the race of Maroboduus was signal in it; yet, as an elective monarchy, it was often shifting. Maroboduus himself was a "marcomann," or *borderer* of the Danube; but we find also Vannius the Quade, and Catualda the Gothon, in the chief authority. Thus the Suevian system was a sort of mean between that of Goths or Dacians, and that of Low Germany; which is in harmony with what we might expect from other considerations. The Suevian power often included the Lygians within it, although the Lygians had an internal confederacy of their own; a phenomenon so common in ancient Greece, that we must not rest on it too exclusively as any proof that the Lygians were of foreign race. Among the Suevians *proper*, Strabo expressly includes the Semnones; but excludes the Lygians. He says that the Suevi reach from the Rhine to the Elbe, and in part extend beyond the Elbe;—are partly within the forest [the Bohemian north-east limit?], and partly beyond it, on the frontier of the Getæ. Tacitus regards the Suevi as "holding the greater part of Germany," and says that they are even externally distinguished from all the other Germans by the treatment of their hair. "Among the Suevi," says he, "the Semnones regard themselves as the most ancient and most noble;"—"fortune adds authority to them, since they live in a hundred pagi; and their great mass enables them to believe themselves the head of the Suevi." The Suevi proper were, in Tacitus's view, genuine Germans; and that their nearer confederates also were German in tongue may be reasonably inferred from his remark that the Marsigni and Buri (eastern races) have the same language as the Suevi. If the Semnones (who were less distant) had been un-German in tongue, he must have known it, and would have been sure to tell us: yet Dr. Latham would persuade us that the Semnones were Slavonic, in order that he may make out that Slavonism has no where, in later ages, encroached on Germany.

He certainly has gratuitously invented difficulties. When the Germans flocked into the Roman empire in numbers so vast as at length to reconstruct society from its very basis, and inundate Gaul and Italy with German words, surely they must have left behind them in their own land an immense vacuum. It is well known, that while the native institutions ascribed by Tacitus to the Germans are found in the common-law and municipalities of Anglo-Saxon England, they vanished out of Germany itself, who owes her local and municipal law to Rome. This is a strong testimony to the emptiness which the German invaders of the Roman empire left behind them. Suppose that the women did *not* always accompany them, and that it was not (in this

sense) a national migration; still, if the flower of the youth departed, the old country was left very defenceless: and at what time Slavonians entered Bohemia and other parts there was no historian to record. To argue from the silence of history against such a change of population, of which no Italian could easily be informed,—and in an age when Italian literature itself was all but vanishing,—is not the smallest of Dr. Latham's weaknesses.

Germany emptied itself southward, and thereby opened itself to Slavonian, to Hunnite, to Magyar invasions. That land of many centres has never yet been duly poised into one stable confederation. When this end is achieved, Europe may at length attain a permanent equilibrium.

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ART. VI.—THE LITERATURE OF SPIRIT-RAPPING.

*The Spiritual Herald.* London, 1856.

*The Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph.* 1855-6.

*Apparitions: a New Theory.* By Newton Crosland. London, 1856.

*Epic of the Starry Heaven.* By Thomas L. Harris. New York, 1856.

*Lytic of the Golden Age.* By Thomas L. Harris. New York, 1856.

WHATEVER we may think of what is called, however improperly, Spiritualism, we cannot deny that it possesses a literature. We may be unscientific, and inclined to think the whole subject a grotesque absurdity; or we may be scientific, and disposed to account for the phenomena by some theory of mental delusion or physical force: but whatever we think of it, the fact remains, that a considerable number of persons not only believe in table-rapping, table-tipping, spectral hands, flying musical instruments, conversations held with, and revelations given by, spirits; but they solemnly record their belief, collect and print remarkable instances of such manifestations, and have reduced "spiritualism" into a certain curious order and system. In England, this literature cannot be said to flourish; it exists, but in a very poor and precarious way, the number of believers being too small to defray the expense of elaborate or frequent publications. But in America the Spiritualists boast that they number nearly three millions. They have a voluminous current literature of Spiritualism. They there, too, possess what we should call a minor



poet, but what they call a "medium giving the utterances of medieval poets." At any rate, they have a person who, either naturally or supernaturally, produces every year a poem about the size of *Paradise Lost*. Let us reject the three millions as a palpable exaggeration; but even if we divide the number by ten, there is something worth our passing attention in the mere fact, that three hundred thousand persons of English speech and blood should reject the obvious explanation that this writer is a weak, fluent versifier, with second-rate powers of imitation; and should accept as a truer account, that his verses contain the thoughts, and are shaped in the language, of great deceased poets, who do not so much inspire him as use him as their mouth-picce.

We do not wish to attempt any solution of the problem which "spiritualism" offers. We have no theory, suggestions, or interpretations to propose. It is only in their literary aspect that we regard the publications of which a list is given at the head of our article; and which, though only a very small fraction of the whole literature, are yet, we think, sufficient to represent it. When first any belief, superstition, or general movement of the human mind is described in writing, the documents are of too vague, fragmentary, and partial a character to afford material for an estimate of that which they seek to represent. But a time comes when we find that the facts, however often repeated, are substantially the same; and the theory, or belief, which binds these facts together assumes a rounded and definite form. Spiritualism has arrived at this point: we can gather what the facts are said to be; we can make out what Spiritualists think is the true inference those facts suggest. So far the literature of Spiritualism will carry us. When we have attained this result, we may make what use of it we please. We may ascribe it to collusion or delusion, to electricity, or to what is termed the "od force;" we may laugh over it or weep over it. But the first thing is to obtain the result; and to accomplish this, although necessarily in a brief and imperfect manner, will be our endeavour in the following pages.

"Spiritualism" purports to be the communication of living men with spirits, and, almost invariably, with the spirits of deceased men. We have, therefore, first to ask what are the modes of communication; and secondly, what kind of things are communicated. The modes of communication ascend in importance through a regular series—the lowest being table-tipping, and the highest the trance of a medium; and the inferiority on any particular occasion being attributed sometimes to a want of practice in the man, sometimes to a certain impotency in the spirit. So, too, there are very marked differences in the nature

of the communication given. What is the lowest it would be invidious to decide; although, if called upon to pronounce, we should perhaps venture to select a certain hymn, stated to be the joint effort of David, Nehemiah, and Daniel, as presenting the greatest contrast we have met with between the earthly wisdom and the heavenly imbecility of its authors. But clearly there can be no higher utterances than the poems of Mr. Harris, the prolific American to whom we have referred above. For they are stated in a preface written by one of the leading Spiritualists of America to be a splendid triumph of the Ideal, an earthly echo of the infinite harmony, and sublime spheremusic: and we should suppose that no praise from a Spiritualist could be higher than this.

The most elementary modes of communication are those in which the spirits do nothing more than announce their presence by interfering with some of the laws that ordinarily fetter inanimate nature. To this class belong the most common and the most notorious of all the "spiritual" phenomena, that of table-turning or tipping. Every one knows how a circle is formed, and how a table is made to spin round. But this seems to be considered in spiritual circles as too infantile a manifestation for any of the initiated to trouble themselves with. They do not begin lower than with a table being hoisted, more or less completely, into the air; nor do they think much of this. "I have known," says Judge Edmonds, an American believer, "a pine table, with four legs, lifted bodily up from the floor, in the centre of a circle of six or eight persons, turned upside down and laid upon its top at our feet, then lifted up over our heads, and put leaning against the back of the sofa on which we sat. . . . I have seen a mahogany table, having only a centre leg, and with a lamp burning on it, lifted from the floor at least a foot, in spite of the efforts of those present, and shaken backwards and forwards as one would shake a goblet in his hand, and the lamp retain its place." Professor Faraday, as is well known, constructed an instrument to show that all the table-moving was the result of muscular action. A spiritualist, in order to refute this, tried several experiments, which he described in a paper inserted in the *Spiritual Herald*; and one of his experiments and its results was as follows:

"After Faraday's letter was published, being resolved to test the matter still further, we placed ourselves as before, and charged the table. In two minutes, in obedience to my will, the leg of the table rose, as on the previous occasion, full four or five inches. I immediately pulled off my shoes and stockings, as preconcerted, and jumped upon the corner of the table, which, of course, resumed its normal position, all four legs remaining firm upon the floor as usual. My

father and mother then continued to charge the table; and in three minutes the leg of the table, at the corner where I stood, rose, carrying me up into the air. My father then took off his slippers and stockings; and standing also upon the table with his arm round my waist, left my mother alone to operate, who placed her hands on the table, *quite at the corner*. In three minutes the table rose as before, *carrying both my father and myself upwards*, and my father only kept his footing by holding on to the ceiling. Our united weights could not be less than one hundred and fifty to two hundred pounds, exclusive of the table."

The next step in the scale of communication is, that the table should move without any pressure or touch whatsoever. A story of such a manifestation is told by Dr. Hare, an American professor. He says that, "at a request," the table commenced its motion with moderate speed, occasionally halting, and then gliding on a foot or two at once. On reaching folding-doors dividing off two parlours, it rose over an iron-rod, projecting half or three-quarters of an inch above the level of the carpet. It then entered the other parlour, and went its whole length until it came near the pier-glass at the end. At request (probably of the owner of the pier-glass), the motion was then reversed, and it returned until it again reached the iron-rod. Here it stuck. The table hove, creaked, and struggled; but all in vain. The medium was then impressed by the spirits to write, that if the fore-legs were lifted over the bar, they (the spirits) thought they could push the back-legs over. This was done, and the motion kept on. This seems to us one of the most curious stories in the whole literature of Spiritualism. The table going off rather stiffly at starting, but taking its rod with a gallant bound the first time; its lucky pause just short of the pier-glass; its return in the same course; the spirits' feeling rather faint, but anxious to do their utmost, and desirous to come back and finish handsomely, if they could but get the fore-legs lifted; and the mere notion of a spirit being too "done" to jump quite by itself,—make a whole calculated to try rather severely the faith of a beginner.

Analogous to such a manifestation is that of a table which goes through a pantomime of emotion. We find an anecdote of a sceptical German philosopher, who was brought by a friend to take part in a spiritual circle. At last the table paid particular attention to the philosopher, and it appeared that it was the spirit of that gentleman's father who was then moving the table. "Various questions were put, and answered. One was, 'Were you angry, my father, that I left home as I did?' No response. 'How is this?' said he to me (it is the spiritualist that tells the tale). I said that perhaps his father was trying to remember what

anger was. The table, after a few moments, moved up closely to him and pressed him. 'What is the meaning of this?' I suggested that it might represent an embrace, and the table moved in the affirmative. 'It is very extraordinary. Here is not only intelligence, but feeling. I am convinced.' Such," says the triumphant narrator, "was the exclamation of my philosopher." What a model of a philosopher he must have been, and how eminently fit to be converted!

It seems, in fact, one of the recognised parts of the programme of a spiritual evening to have a sceptic introduced; who is allowed to wonder and examine for the first hour or two, but who is then overpowered with conviction, and becomes the lion of the night. The Spiritualists assert that they have been so successful in America as to have instilled a belief in a future life into no less than twenty-five thousand infidels. Generally there is some one particular occurrence offered more especially as "a demonstration" to the sceptic of the evening, upon which his conversion follows immediately. The history of these "tests," or "demonstrations," abounds throughout the spiritualist literature. We can only find room for one example, which we select partly because the story can stand by itself, and partly because there seems to us something unusually comic in the reality of a future life being brought indisputably home by seeing the gyrations of a fat lady. The story is told in the words of Dr. W. Geib:

"The following dialogue then occurred: 'Will the spirits be so obliging as to make a physical demonstration?' Answered by three raps on the table, which were responded to by an affirmative expression from the whole circle. My seat was at the side of the medium, a married lady of considerably more than ordinary weight. Ques. 'Will the spirits move Mrs. D. in her chair?' Ans. 'Yes.' As this demonstration was intended for my special benefit, and our invisible friends were fully committed for its performance, my attention was riveted on the lady who was to be the subject of it. 'Madam, will you please put your feet on the spar of the chair?' This being fully accomplished, 'and your hands in your lap' was added. As her hands dropped, *the lady left my side*, passed about two feet backward, and immediately returned to her former position at the table."

Tables are not by any means the only inanimate objects that are moved. We hear of "the empty chairs about a room commencing a general frolic, advancing and retreating, upsetting and exhibiting a variety of pranks." We further learn that on the same occasion when the chairs were thus impelled, a mat by the door was suddenly rolled up at one end without human agency. A hat was thrown from the table when no person was near. The table-cloth and all its contents were drawn off and thrown upon the floor. Still more astonishing is the history of

a guitar, which was taken from a table by the spirits, and was carried round the room fifty or a hundred times with most astonishing velocity, apparently some two or three feet above every body's head, and very near to the walls, yet without ever touching the walls or the stove-pipe, and not coming near any person in the room unless requested to do so; "but repeatedly," says the narrator, "at my request it would descend in its flight and touch me on the arm or shoulder." Even this, however, is nothing to the experience of Mr. John Quincy Adams of Ohio, who states that he himself was "transported through the air for the distance of nearly a mile, while a handsaw and a square which he held in his hands were beaten together, and a delightful tune rung out."

Good music seems to be a very customary mode of manifestation. We read of an accordion which, held wrong way upwards in the hand of a medium, played of itself two or three tunes with great success. "It played 'Home sweet home' and 'God save the Queen' with a delicacy of tone which struck every one present." "In fact," as the narrator continues, in the unassuming language of a spiritualist, "I never heard silence threaded with such silver lines." Sometimes the performance is vocal. "The spirits spoke to us," says Mr. Partridge, in detailing some remarkable manifestations at the residence of Mr. Koons, Athens County, Ohio, "and requested us to be perfectly silent. Presently we heard human voices singing; and the sound gradually increased, each part relatively, until it appeared as if a full choir of human voices were in our small room singing most exquisitely: harmony, rather than noise, seemed to constitute the spirits' song."

The next stage in spirit manifestations is that of corporeal appearances. Sometimes the circle is visited by hands and other portions of the human form, which appear and disappear to show the power and reality of the spirits. It is not always, however, that even a hand is within the compass of the communicating spirits; and we learn that they are occasionally obliged to content themselves with showing a couple of fingers. When a hand is accomplished, it is both visible and palpable; and is in the habit of coming and grasping the knees of each person present in a manner that must be very uncomfortable to a novice. "I distinctly," says a contributor to the *Spiritual Herald*, "felt the fingers up to the palm of a hand. It was a warm, soft, fleshy, radiant, substantial hand, such as I should be glad to feel at the extremity of the friendship of my best friends." And to guard against a somewhat natural explanation of the phenomenon, he adds, "As a point of observation I will remark, that I should feel no more difficulty in swearing that the member I felt was a

human hand of extraordinary life, and not Mr. Home's foot, than that the nose of the Apollo Belvidere is not a horse's ear." The most curious instance of the partial powerlessness of the spirits, and of the assistance that they are willing to derive from their living friends, is recorded in the narrative of the manifestations at Mr. Koons'. Spirits' hands and arms, we read, "were recognised in our presence on several occasions; and that we might see them more distinctly, they sometimes wetted their hands with a weak solution of phosphorus, which Mr. Koons prepared some time previously by their request." The spirits that wanted phosphorus to show their hands off must have been comparatively a weak set; for we find that another hand ("which was ascertained through the alphabet to be the hand of a late sister of the host") took up rings off a table and jingled them in its fingers. It is creditable to the nerves of the spiritualists that no one seems ever to have been alarmed by these odds and ends of human bodies turning up amongst the circles except one gentleman; who, seeing a brown head covered with thick curly hair ascending from beneath the table, was, he honestly confesses, frightened, and went away, or, as he technically expresses it, "broke up the *séance*."

All the manifestations we have hitherto noticed have this in common, that they are only general indications of the power of the spirits to make known their presence to men, and do not give any special information. We may now pass to those by which such information is bestowed. Of these, the most elementary is table-rapping. The medium having ascertained that the spirit is in communication, either by having received some of the signs before mentioned, or by asking the spirit to do a particular thing, as to rap the table, if present, begins to say the alphabet; and when the desired letter is reached the spirit gives a rap. The selected letters are then put together by the circle, and the communication is perfect. The communications given in this laborious way are, as might be expected, rather terse and mysterious. A spirit was asked if he had any message for his wife, who was still living. Five affirmative touches on the knee of the questioner showed that the spirit wished for the alphabet. It was called over, and the spirit gave a rap at T, and so on until it had spelt "The immortal loves." The narrator acknowledges that this seemed to him "a rather thin message;" but he was afterwards delighted to find that the spirit and his wife, in the days of their joint mortality, had been accustomed to debate the question whether spirits were capable of affection, and that the "thin message" was really an answer to a serious difficulty. On another occasion a spirit spelt by the alphabetic telegraph the words "My dear E—, imortality is a great truth." "The spell-

ing 'imortality,'" says the contributor of this anecdote, "surprised me at first; but I recollected that the deceased, whom I knew well, was constantly versed in black-letter writing, which makes elision in that way." The spelling of a spirit who makes this sort of elision must be very puzzling and discouraging; and in the *Spiritual Telegraph* we have a record of some difficulties which the first sight of the letters selected at a *séance* caused to the spiritualists, and of the efforts made to arrive at a solution. The letters, as determined by the rapping, stood as follows :

g o t o z e a l o u s g a b e s i n w a r d s .

On receiving this, C., one of the persons present, thought there might be some zealous man in Wardour Street. A lady said she knew that street well, but did not know the name of Gabes. A third (knowing names to be sometimes telegraphed phonetically) asked the spirit whether Gabes did not mean the name Jabez? The spirit gave an affirmative tap; and the party arrived at the conclusion that a person of the name of Jabez Inwards must be meant. What with black-letter elisions and phonetic spelling, it must be hard work following a spirit's discourse.

It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that all spiritualists concur in thinking the alphabet a very rudimentary and unsatisfactory method of communication, and directly their connection with the spiritual world has been well established, hurry on to methods more intelligible and indisputable. Of the higher methods, there are two kinds: either the spirit addresses the circle directly, or it operates through a medium. Direct addresses, again, seem to take two forms: either a pencil is moved along paper without any living person touching it, and the spirit is its own scribe; or the spirit speaks aloud. Of the latter method we have only come upon one instance, and there the spirit is said to have spoken through a trumpet; an instance of the former we have in the following passage :

"A large card was then taken, about ten by six inches square; upon which was laid a sheet of paper and a pencil, held by the medium by one end beneath the table, the end by which it was held being marked in order to show that its position did not change; when it was apparently seized by some power beneath the table, with an evident intention of taking it out of his hands. The motion of the card was seen by one who sat opposite, and it touched several of the party. The pencil was *heard* to write; and taking up the card, a 'Good evening to all the friends' was found written upon the paper; to have written which the medium must have held the card and written with the same hand, with an entire reversion of the order of writing, for it was to him upside down. This was repeated several times."

But much the most frequent communications are through pri-

vileged persons who bear the title of mediums. To be a medium is a special gift ; and it is a revocable one, as we hear of a lady who, for some fault, had her "mediumship" taken away from her for seven months. Sometimes the medium writes what the spirit reveals, but in such a way that the spirit may be said itself to do part of the writing. Thus we hear of a Mrs. K. who wrote at a spirit's command ; but it was observed "that Mrs. K. did not move her fingers, nor her wrist, but that her whole arm moved from the shoulder." On examining the writing, it was found to be in a bold though old-fashioned style, and purported to be from Andrew Sublette, a well-known trapper. It was a warning to an officer that a plan had been formed to assassinate him. Sometimes the medium writes unassisted, or draws. One medium is said to have been in the habit of drawing maps of the spiritual world, and it is related as a matter of wonder that all the maps were very much alike ; or the medium draws the likeness of a deceased person. Mr. Rogers, a tailor, was a medium ; and with his eyes blindfolded, and in thirty minutes, he drew a picture of a girl, recognised as the departed niece of a person present. This manifestation gave great delight to the spiritualist who records it. He says that sceptics often asked for some practical result from Spiritualism ; and exclaims, "Haven't I got the picture? which any one may see." Most usually, however, the medium speaks, and gives utterance to the dictates of the communicating spirit exactly as if they were the words of the person speaking them. Sometimes, but not always, the speaker is thrown into a trance before the utterance is made. The bystanders seem generally to take the reality of the spiritual communication on the credit of the medium, who is known to be in intimate relations with the spiritual world. But they have at any time the power to test the fact by asking the spirits for a sign of their presence, such as a rapping on the table. Generally this test is dispensed with ; and it seems to be a matter of custom or politeness that the communication of any habitual member of the circle should be accepted as genuine.

Let us now pass to the things communicated : and first of all we may mention, that by an arrangement exceedingly convenient to most of the present believers, and flattering to their national pride, the language of spirits is almost invariably English. "I asked Swedenborg," says one medium, "if the English language would be the universal language ; and he said, 'Yes, the English language is spoken by the angels in some of the interior societies.'" Accordingly we find that all the spirits, of whatever nation, who communicate, express themselves in English more or less correct. We have only met with one exception. There a spirit, who gave the vague address of "Don Carlo, a native of



Spain," uttered the sentiment, *El reino de dios no esta en palabras sino la virtua*. "We were informed," says the narrator, "by the spirit of Burns, that we must bring it before the puzzling public, and the spirit would translate it another time." Accordingly, a week afterwards, Burns helped the "puzzling public" to the solution of this difficult sentence by explaining it to mean "the kingdom of God is not in words but in virtue."

A spirit who announces its presence is always first asked to give its name. Generally it proves to be the spirit of some popular British favourite. Burns has a great fancy for appearing, and communicates twice as often as any one else. Franklin, Chalmers, Tom Paine, Wallace, Shelley, and Walter Scott, are among those who approach nearest to Burns in the frequency of their visits, and the enthusiasm which their presence excites. Sometimes a spirit communicates nothing more than its name, but does some characteristic act. "We have," says a spiritualist, "a table broken in pieces by a spirit professing to be Samson." On other occasions the name is given in rather a distorted form. Thus a spirit, "evidently belonging to a high state," persisted at several meetings in announcing himself as "Archbishop Tilton." Where a number of spirits present themselves at once, the impatience and curiosity to hear their names is naturally great. "Can you bear," said a spirit to a circle,— "can you bear the idea of the presence of a number of spirits who seemed so unlike each other while upon earth?" The members of the circle unanimously answered in the affirmative, and the following names were received: Wesley, Channing, Luther, Volney, Priestley, Whitfield, Cicero, Swedenborg, Mahomet, and Combe. With few exceptions, the spirits are either those of persons recently deceased or of eminent men. Exceptions do, however, occur, of which a curious instance was the manifestation of two spirits, who described themselves as bearing the name of King; being father and son, and having lived on this earth 14,500 years ago. We regret to say, they confined their communication to the utterance of a few moral platitudes. It would have been far more interesting if they had let us know what two persons of the name of King found to do in the pre-Adamite world.

We must pause for a moment to observe that in the record of spiritual communications we are often exposed to mortifying disappointments. We find the revelation wanting exactly where it promises to be most interesting. Thus we hear that the spirits told a circle to put fifty pieces of clean paper into a cupboard. Half-an-hour after, the pieces of paper were taken out, and were found to be covered with writing. As the spirits were here left entirely to themselves, we should like to have a specimen of their composition; but the narrative is silent. Again, we are told of

a medium, a girl of fragile form, who, at the early age of sixteen, "was developed on the philosophic plain to an extent that would do honour to a philosopher of the most mature years." But we have no specimen of her philosophy. Lastly, the spirits themselves sometimes seem to promise more than they perform. For example, we should have hardly expected a spirit to have considered the following account of the origin of man sufficiently new to warrant its solemn announcement :

"I would now wish to draw your attention more particularly to the formation of that most wonderful of beings—*Man!* I can only state to you my own individual opinion, according to the knowledge and experience which I have had in this and other spheres; and my opinion is, that the origin of primeval human nature is to be ascribed solely and wholly to the universal Creator."

Among communications of the simplest kind, are disclosures of events that have happened on earth, but are unknown, or only partially ascertained. Such, for instance, is the account of the loss of the *Pacific*. The writer says that he was sitting in company with a medium, and other friends. The medium, Mrs. Harriet Porter, suddenly exclaimed, "You have asked for a test; I will now give you one. The steamship *Pacific* will be wrecked, and all on board will perish. Put that in your pocket, and keep it as a test." On another occasion, Mrs. Porter was visited by two strange ladies, who, on entering her rooms, gave no intimation respecting the specific object of their coming. Mrs. Porter was then "impressed" to say to them in her capacity of medium, "My name is Samuel Havens. The *Pacific*, on board which I was an engineer, is lost; but I am here." One of the ladies "gave way to painful and violent emotion," and acknowledged she had a brother of that name on board. There is something very striking in the story: the two ladies calling without the slightest apology and explanation; and the hostess, after a pause of astonishment, beginning, "My name is Havens, and I was lost." It would certainly give a freshness to morning calls which they are apt to want, if we could rely on the lady of the house making such abrupt revelations.

As, however, might naturally be expected, the greater part of the communications relate to the state of spirits after death. All agree that death makes much less immediate change than might be supposed. The Reverend George Ferguson describes the amusement with which he attended his own funeral, and heard the clergyman say he was in heaven; whereas he was within a yard or two of the speaker. Judge Edmonds gives a long account of a visit from spirits, to the number of a hundred, belonging to persons lost in the *Arctic*. Most of them were still in the first confusion of dying, and told their stories in a very obscure

style ; but a sailor was "evidently more at home than the rest." He described how he died, by his head being bumped up against the bottom of the ship ; and that on his entrance into the spirit-world he was welcomed by his father and two other relatives. "But," continues the judge, "he could not give me his name or the street where he resided. There was no medium present through whom the abstract idea of a name could be given."

Spirits recently disembodied seem to be closely bound up with every thing earthly ; although a quicker migration into the interior circles of heaven is accorded to persons who have led a life of general benevolence. There does not seem to be much positive suffering. One spiritualist says that he had only met with two spirits that owned themselves unhappy. Of these, one "admitted that he was drowned in consequence of getting dead drunk. On being asked if he were happy, he answered, 'D—d happy ;' and said he was sorry to have quitted this life. He manifested a desire for tobacco and grog." Very bad men, however, seem to undergo an immediate, though jocose punishment, and to be the butts of better spirits. Thus a medium named Annie was asked what was the condition of Palmer ; and said, "He is in an iron box ; the spirits have him there." She added, that the influence of murderers after execution was more strongly exerted upon the world, and that hence other murders often succeeded the execution of such persons ; and she said, "this was a powerful reason against capital punishments." On another occasion, Annie gave a very minute account of the position of the late Emperor of Russia ; and her statement shows very plainly that the spiritual world was strongly in favour of the Allies :

"On inquiring of our seeress to-day if she had heard since of the Czar, whilst in the trance, she said, 'Yes ; your friend (the general) tells me that he was last seen in an iron cage ; he had become so domineering, the good spirits could not manage him. They have given him a sofa, chair, and table, with pen, ink, and paper ; and he is to be kept there until he signs a 'treaty of peace.' Sometimes the Emperor appears to be more conformable, and agrees to sign the conditions ; and at other times he will not. Then he pretends he will sign it ; but inwardly determines to make it void when he chooses. But with this thought in his mind (according to the order of *spiritual* laws) he cannot make the pen write. Still he tries to make believe that he has signed it, and hands it gravely over to the good spirits ; who smile, and quietly give the Czar his document back again, saying that nothing has been written. But he is not unhappy ; in fact, he had begun to make a little progress before this state, and even to learn a few truths ; and a beautiful palace had been lent him to live in ; but he soon wanted all the parks and gardens around, and the other palaces in sight as well ; and his majesty became so angry and domineering, when told that he could not have the property of others, and be allowed to have all his

own way, that the spirits were obliged to confine him in an iron cage. He does not see the bars; it appears to him as a small room which he chooses to occupy."

The spirits are kind enough to explain pretty fully the moral and physical relation in which they stand to the race of men on earth. Burns and Dugald Stewart, more particularly, contributed through Mr. Scott of Belfast two little essays, in which they stimulated and sustained the ardour of those who are devoted to making known the truths of Spiritualism. Either because they accommodated themselves to the taste of their hearers, or because they have lost something by their passage through the grave, the joint effort seems to us scarcely worthy of their earthly reputation. Dugald Stewart, especially, seems to have entirely parted with that easy elegance of style which distinguished him here. We scarcely think that he would, during his mortal career, have suffered such expressions to escape his pen as "the fulsome freezing fabrication of the fall;" nor would his ardour in any terrestrial cause have prompted him to exclaim that the principles he advocated would "ever despise the iniquitous aid of civil crutches." Spiritualists, however, who probably care more for matter than style, will gladly hear "that the cause will rise up, and proceed on the towering wings (the mortal Dugald would have added of what), and soar in hopes of man's immortality;" and that "the days of every description of time-serving and dishonesty are numbered."

The spirit of "John Edmundson" also gave an account of heaven itself. It appears that the celestial regions unite at once all that can satisfy the imagination of a railway traveller and the memory of a reader of the Hebrew Scriptures. If a country clodhopper were first taken to the Menai Straits, with its tubular and suspension bridges, and then transported to Hunt and Roskell's, the expression of his admiration would be found to accord very closely with those which the signs of heaven elicited from John Edmundson's spirit. We hear that "there were some of the most elaborate carvings and inlayings of pearls and precious stones that could possibly be done;" and that "I was conducted over the suspension-bridge; and the bridge also was finished in the most elaborate style." Two circumstances, however, lent an unearthly solemnity to the scene. The one was, that all the heavenly buildings had been constructed in Hebrew dimensions. We are told, for instance, that the angels conducted the new-comer "through some of the most magnificent streets." They pointed to one, and told him it was "the Wanderer's Home;" and added, "the length thereof is one hundred thousand cubits; the breadth thereof is one hundred thousand cubits; the height thereof is one hundred thou-

sand cubits;—so that (as they kindly pointed out) it is four-square.” The other circumstance is, that many buildings, or portions of buildings, have a symbolical character. We read that “my instructors proposed we should have a tower (J. E. has not apparently reached the interior circle where strict English is talked) through some of the great pillars, to see the beauties of the architecture. On the east were models of the human form having garlands of purple, green, and yellow entwined twelve times about each of their figures. These,” they said, “will remind you of the beauties of truth derived from love.” In the entrance were statues representing vice and virtue, ignorance and wisdom; and they were all in the attitude of showing compassion to each other. “These,” said they, “will remind you of the beauties of truth derived from good.” The latter revelation does not awaken in us, we confess, the delight which J. E.’s spirit evidently expects. We had hoped that ignorance looking with compassion on wisdom was a purely earthly phenomenon.

The spirits are also willing to explain the physical methods by which they act on man. A communication from Franklin and Dalton ascribed their power “to vital spirit in its elemental state, the finest of all substances.” On one occasion, the spirits, expressing themselves through a medium, explained why, in rapping and other similar manifestations, they generally operated *beneath* the table; and they stated the reason to be that “the upper part of man, or the brain and senses, were more opposed to spiritual truth than the vital, visceral, or instinctive part, which, in this case, is conveniently separated from the other by the table.” That the pit of the stomach is the organ of spiritual truth is one of the most striking revelations of Spiritualism. Nor is any capable of a wider application. It would be most satisfactory if it could be ascertained that a hardened sinner could be awakened by colocynth, and theological difficulties elucidated by senna.

Communications on social and religious subjects are abundant; and among them is one which has startled us more than any thing else we have met in the literature of Spiritualism. It is a political utterance from the spirits of Stanley and Peel. The sentiments and language are not very like Sir Robert Peel’s: but that is nothing; death may have changed his opinion. But who can the Stanley be whose spirit is enlightening us? Evidently it is the Stanley who was the associate and colleague of Peel. That Lord Stanley has certainly ceased to be in one sense, but he still professes to be alive under the title of the Earl of Derby. Chamisso’s man, who lost his shadow, is nothing to this. The Tories have been laughed at lately as a defunct party;

but that all this time they should have been suffering themselves to be led by a man whose spirit is actually disembodied, is far beyond what any one could have believed. The Tories have also been blamed not unfrequently for professing rather more than they really held to be true; and Lord Derby has been thought too clever a man not to have doubts as to some of the propositions which, as a party-leader, he has felt bound to maintain. But the difference between the sentiments uttered by his body in the House of Peers and those really entertained by his spirit in the other world, is quite terrible. Who that remembers his recent speeches, would have for a moment considered it possible that the true thoughts of his spirit were such as these? We quote from "an Address from the spirits of Stanley and Peel, on the Suffrages of the People":

"Oppression now lays its iron hand upon the working-classes of England; though your rulers may try all the schemes that lay in their power to make you believe that you are a self-governed people, yet such is not the case—far from it.

Be it known unto you all, that your liberty is in the hands of your aristocracy. The liberty that is so dear to the working-classes of England is now at stake! They have it almost in their power to ally them even with the dust. Such is the power of your rulers.

Does it not become you as well as them to be joined? and joined you must be, or never will you have real liberty and freedom. The hand of oppression must be laid low. Look at the present ruling power of your country. Have they acted a just and upright part? Have they not deluded the country by all the means that have lain in their power? Now is the time for the working-classes of England to strike the blow. Now is the time for them to lift up their voices in the cause of liberty and freedom."

The spirits of poets often condescend to address the circles in poetry, and generally adopt the metre and approximate to the language of their chief poems written on earth. The Scotch poets are especially fond of imitating themselves through mediums; although it must be allowed, that often the success is not great. Walter Scott, for instance, was asked how Spiritualism was getting on at Glasgow: and replied:

"Some cries its all fudge,  
Others laugh it to scorn;  
But rest you assured  
Both parties are wrong.  
For, if they live long,  
They plainly shall see  
The twig you have planted  
Will grow to a tree."

He used to have a better ear for rhyme while in the body than to make "scorn" go with "wrong." Allan Cunningham is dis-

tinguished at once by the Scotch turn of his spiritual verses, and by his interest in theology. He gave the following lines, among many others, to a spiritual circle :

“ Weel may the keel row, the keel row, the keel row,  
Weel may the keel row to Scotland’s peaceful shore.  
The land where first I drew my breath,  
Where once I met the monster death,  
And learnt to prize a uscleas faith  
Which never was prized before.”

On being asked what is the useless faith referred to, he answered, “ a faith without good works.” We cannot forbear remarking, that if the popular faith of Scotland is useless, there does not seem much object in the keel rowing in that particular direction.

Burns, however, as we have before said, is more frequent than any one in his communications : and he is generally satirical, ironical, or jocose. He is not only friendly, but facetious. For example, a person happening to come into the room wearing a white hat, Burns instantly tipped out, “ I wish I had a white hat.” The following dialogue ensued : “ Q. Will you give this man’s name ?—A. I look not on men’s names, but their natures, Q. Are you Burns the poet ?—A. Yes, sir, I am, and no mistake.” On another occasion he gave the following communication, which, “ of course, must be understood as ironical” :

“ If you discern a spark of truth,  
Smother it out ;  
Lest it find the prying youth,  
Smother it out.  
For it will kindle to a blaze,  
And fly, like lightning, different ways,  
And put philosophers in a maze :  
Smother it out.”

At another sitting he gave the following. “ Some unbelievers being present, it was satirical” :

“ If you discern a useful science,  
Put it down ;  
Or it will set you at defiance :  
Put it down.  
Perchance the poor will soon be fed  
With good beef-steak and daily bread ;  
No useless blood no more will shed.  
Put it down.”

To which text was appended a commentary. Alas, like human texts and commentaries, it was *obscurum per obscurius*. We read in continuation that :

“ This, being all got in single letters, and at first reading, some present said they did not comprehend the meaning. Burns commenced moving the table powerfully again, and settled the meaning by adding — ‘ Kick it down.’ ”

But all these are poor revelations and faint triumphs as compared with those vouchsafed to the cream and flower of Spiritualism, Mr. Thomas L. Harris. This gentleman has produced three great poems under the immediate influence and inspiration of various inhabitants of the other world. The *Epic of the Starry Heavens* is a poem of four thousand lines, and was dictated by Mr. Harris in twenty-six hours and sixteen minutes. As, however, the dictation took place on twenty-two different occasions, his editor, Mr. Brittan, of New York, thinks it necessary to give reasons why the natural solution that Mr. Harris made the poem himself should not be received. His reasons are: first, that Mr. Harris, when not entranced, was occupied in perfecting a mechanical invention, and so his thoughts were turned away from poetry; secondly, that Mr. Harris was just setting out on a journey, and had evidently no notion that he would be detained; thirdly, the fits of inspiration came on at hours such as dinner-time, when no one who could exercise choice would have wished to write a poem; fourthly, that Mr. Harris slept soundly after uttering the several portions of the poem; and fifthly, that it is unlikely Mr. Harris would refuse to lay claim to the credit of the poem if he could honestly do so. Those who are convinced by these reasons will be glad to hear how Mr. Harris came to receive this stupendous inspiration. A short preface, purporting to emanate from "the Lyrical Paradise of the Heaven of Spirits," informs us that because "his interiors (our readers will remember the visceral theory) are of a sacerdotal character, he is permitted to be impressed from societies of hierophants, who discharge the priestly functions in the heaven of spirits;" and that the poem was "given through the agency of a circle of medieval spirits, who inhabit a classic domain in an ultimate dependency of the heaven of spirits which corresponds in many of its features to lower Italy." It was permitted to a spirit greatly beloved (a foot-note tells us it was Dante) to induct the medium into rapport with the general sphere of their society; and "permission being obtained from superior authority," the various forms of wisdom and beauty which the poem describes were, we learn, imaged on the sensorium.

The merits of a poem are a matter of taste. The preface tells us that the Epic poems written in this way resemble the virgin daughters of the sky, whose spiritual forms are garmented with the robes of light. There may be persons who would prefer to compare them to indifferent hymns. The burden of the whole Epic is, that the earth is going to be changed, that it will hereafter contain any amount of jewels, alabaster shrines, spirals of golden light, and domes of silver; and that it will be delivered over to a race characterised by unmitigated benevolence.



The following will give a notion of the poems proceeding from priestly inhabitants of the celestial Italy, who act on or through Mr. Harris's intestines :

“ Yes, golden bands  
 Thy desert sands,  
 O Earth, shall interfuse ;  
 And into thee  
 From heaven shall be  
 Impoured celestial dews  
 Of amber light  
 And liquid flame ;  
 And these in turn shall be  
 Cups lifted for  
 The diamond rain  
 Of immortality.  
 The sands shall glow  
 All rosy white ;  
 And streams of silver dew  
 From out the land  
 Of morning light  
 Shall flow thy heart into.”

A *Lyric of the Golden Age* is a still more elaborate production. It is a much thicker volume, and was communicated in about ninety-four hours. Parts of the work were directly contributed by Byron, Keats, Shelley, and Coleridge. Rousseau described and communicated his own “dream;” and Indra, the Indian sage, explained the nature of the heaven appropriated to the Hindoos. Portions referring to the Greek heaven were produced, as the invisible intelligences affirm, by a general influx of ideas from a society of spirits who inhabited ancient Greece. The remaining passages, which represent various phases of the spiritual world “as presented to a spirit intromitted from the earth-sphere and transported through the scenery of the heavens,” are the actual spiritual experiences of the medium. In the introduction, criticism is not so much deprecated as silenced by an announcement that all but spiritualists are unfit to apprehend the meaning of the poem ; but, as an opinion of the *Springfield* (Massachusetts) *Republican* is quoted, with apparent satisfaction, that some of the stanzas are quite equal to the best efforts of the poets imitated, we may venture to say that to speak of the poets as imitated is the language we should be inclined to adopt, although we cannot think quite so highly of the powers of imitation displayed. We are told that “great poems and living evangels like this are earthly echoes of the Infinite Harmonies.” If Mr. Harris were not a medium, we should think the more modest but accurate expression would be, that his composition shows that he has successfully cultivated the art of imitating popular poets so as to produce a resemblance

comprehending a parody of the thoughts of the person he imitates, and a copy of the manner close enough to be ludicrous. Edgar Poe's spirit, for example, on one occasion contributed the following "echo" of a poem written by that poet when alive. We quote from the preface of the *Lyric of the Golden Age* :

" I have waited, I have waited,  
As the Evening Star belated,  
When it lingers pale and lonely by the purple sunset door.  
I have found thee, I have found thee,  
And with heart-spells fast have bound thee.'  
So from out the glowing halo sang the angel-maid Lenore."

In the Lyric itself, Byron thus reminds himself of *Childe Harold* :

" O Venice, I could wail for thee and weep  
As a young mother o'er her infant slain ;  
Thou who didst march to victory o'er the deep  
And plough the seas for glory more than gain.  
Yet nations are like men. 'Tis all in vain  
To stay the fell destroyer's ruthless hand ;  
Cities like men are born and die in pain,  
And wisest laws, by wisest sages planned,  
Fail to arrest the sweep of the consumer's brand."

Keats gives the following account of his birth :

" Night overcame me ; I was but a youth,  
Slain by mankind, when still the glad heart fed  
On fair Imagination's daisied banks.  
The young moon lost in a dissolving rain,  
Endymion dead ere Dian's eager kiss,  
Were types of my sad fate. My name was writ  
In water ; but the crystal drops exhaled  
To heaven, and clothed my spirit like a star."

Coleridge above is as philosophical, theological, and poetical as he was below :

" The minster is a marble psalm,  
Where Druid oak and Syrian palm  
Lift the groined roof, and seem to wave  
O'er aisle and chancel, crypt and grave.  
The Church of God in man below  
Methinks should like the minster grow ;  
All truths His threefold voice inspires  
Should build its buttresses and spires ;  
Each holy deed that memory sings  
Should gleam with cherub face and wings  
O'er the high altar's mystic shrine,  
And love make all the place divine."

This is what Spiritualism offers to the wonder and admiration of mankind. The poems of Harris are the topmost round of the ladder of which table-tipping is the bottom. We have in a very rapid manner hurried over the ascent, and have done nothing like justice to the variety of manifestations, the surprising anecdotes, the puzzling utterances that might be col-

lected. No one can say that the literature of Spiritualism is wanting in marvels or in novelty. We wish we could stop here, and add nothing to interfere with the impression which may have been produced on the reader's mind as he has followed the path of spiritual progression; but we regret to say there is a something behind. The fact is, that after some amount of reading, in which all goes on comfortably and pleasantly, we come upon certain passages that show that, however much each spiritualist, or each set of spiritualists, may believe in their own spirits, they do not believe in other people's spirits; nay, they are not sure about their own, for it appears that foolish or wicked spirits come and announce themselves as great and good spirits; so that after an inquiring novice has got over the difficulty of believing that Burns is hitting the table, he has to ascertain that the tapping Burns is not a spiritual sham. This plunges us into the abysses of scepticism;—we are all at sea; we do not feel sure that Burns ever wished for a white hat, or that Allan Cunningham ever discovered the uselessness of his former faith, or that Sir Robert Peel ever thought that the time is come for the oppressed people to rise against the aristocracy. The chilling remarks let fall incidentally by spiritualists are most disheartening. One of them says, "I am persuaded that many of them are spirits evil in themselves, and not to be relied on; those that manifest themselves through tables especially so." Again we read, "It is useless to hear from a spirit whether Christianity or Buddhism is true; whether there is a future state; or whether the spirit himself existed before the creation. Another spirit may reverse the decision of this one: which are we to believe?" In another place we read, "The spirit in general is amiable; and though often waggish and not to be depended on, perfectly harmless." This is but poor comfort; we thought we were listening to Dugald Stewart or Franklin, and we find that we are the playthings of a harmless wag.

Nor have the spiritualists discovered any tests or methods of discernment which can be called satisfactory. One hints that "the state of mind of the parties exercises a most surprising influence upon the table." This is caught up by an enthusiast, who says it is an "acknowledgment of the unerrable test in spiritual intercourse, 'like begets like.'" But what is this test? Let us concede that the goodness or truth of the communicating spirit will correspond with the excellence of the mental state of the "parties:" how can we possibly ascertain this mental state, even in ourselves? Could any man conscientiously walk up to a table and say, "After a severe self-examination, I find myself unfit to communicate with Mahomet, but fit to communicate with Goldsmith"? Or, again, an instance is given in the *Yorkshire Spi-*

*ritual Telegraph*, where a spirit rapped at a table, and announced through the alphabet that his name was "Smibert," and that he had been a surgeon and a poet. How could the most intense self-reflection enable a hearer to decide whether Smibert had or had not been a surgeon? Another spiritualist offers a means of ascertaining the truth of communications, which he may personally have found available or he could scarcely have suggested it, but which presents hopeless difficulties to the mass of mankind. He describes the intervention of a rapping spirit which most unkindly "denied the whole doctrine of modern spiritualism;" and then adds, "Now what are you to make of all this? You can make little of it unless you understand the 'Song of Solomon,' the nature of the spiritual world, and the grammar and syntax of the spirit-language." We do not see how this helps us. We should have more hopes of detecting a waggish spirit unassisted than of getting up spiritual syntax.

With this great blot hanging over it, we must leave Spiritualism. We are bound to say that, however great may be the uncertainty which the theory of waggish spirits throws over all the communications, spiritualists still persevere and believe. They somehow or other cling with astonishing tenacity to the faith that all these flying guitars, and phosphorescent hands, and utterances of the poet Burns, are not a delusion, but a reality. What is the secret of the delusion, if it be one, or the nature of the reality, if it exists, we do not pretend to say. There is something not only strange, but ludicrous, in the records of Spiritualism; but we do not imagine that a mere statement of what is ludicrous can be taken as disposing altogether of a wide-spread belief, and of the phenomena on which it is supposed to rest. Spiritualism affords materials for a scientific investigation. But to be worth any thing, a scientific investigation must be profound, laborious, and accurate. Common sense can restrain us from following any thing which, on the face of it, is ludicrous and absurd; but we may distrust common sense, or we may wish for an account more exhaustive than common sense can give. Modern science may be able to give this account, and to arrange the phenomena of Spiritualism under a certain number of general laws. We do not venture to say whether this is so or not; but we feel sure that no method of treating this and kindred subjects is so utterly worthless as the superficially scientific, which talks vaguely and incoherently about electricity, and galvanism, and nervous forces. Until science can give us something better than such discourses, it is wise to rest content with fighting shy of manifest absurdities, and trust to such temporary guidance as a sense of the ridiculous can afford us.

ART. VII.—THE CRÉDIT MOBILIER AND BANKING COMPANIES IN FRANCE.

*Report presented by the Board of Administration of the General Association of Crédit Mobilier, at the ordinary General Meeting of Shareholders on the 23rd of April 1856. Translated from the French, and published as an advertisement in the Times of May 21, 1856.*

*Les Institutions de Crédit en France. Par M. Eugène Forcade. Revue des deux Mondes, 15 Mars, 1 Avril, 15 Mai, 1 Juin 1856.*

THE crop of currency-pamphlets is beginning. We again read the old titles, "How shall we get through the Winter?" by a MERCHANT; "Too many Bank-notes," by Bullion; "*Ohe jam satis*," by Anti-Peel; "Faith in Paper," by a Warwickshire Magistrate; "Infallible Interchange," by GENIUS; "Sufficient Accommodation," by a Manchester Man—familiar to us ten years ago, likely perhaps to be familiar to us ten years hence. These pamphlets are as sure signs of scarce money as many thistles of a poor soil. When the currency is plenty, people know what it is; when it is rare, they try to make out what it is, in order that they may obtain it. We have, however, no such aim; perhaps, indeed, the recent signs of diminishing scarcity may preclude such literature from multiplying. At any rate, though connected with money, our object is much more humble. We have no certain specific for pecuniary evils: no means of returning to any one the money they have spent. We do not even profess to be able to explain all the phenomena of the recent state of the money-market. We only mean to set forth a few facts as to a neighbouring country, whose pecuniary failures have, it is certain, a close connection with our own.

Even this, in ordinary cases, would be no very easy task. The political institutions of a country are a difficult subject for a foreigner: its daily commercial habits are still more so. We are fortunate, however, in having this time a very accomplished guide. M. Eugène Forcade, in a series of essays (published in the *Revue des deux Mondes*) which we have placed at the head of our article, has thrown so much light on the recent history of the banking companies of France, that there is less risk in writing about them than might be fancied.

A person trained in the current political economy would *à priori* think that governments, despotic or free, had little to do with the trade of banking. The maxims of free trade forbid

them to engage in that trade as much or more than in any other ; they cannot learn it ; they have no means of watching transactions, estimating traders, scrutinising bills. Since they cannot know the business themselves, it is desirable they should interfere as little as possible with those who may know it. As usual, their true office is limited to enforcing the moralities of commerce, to ensuring the performance of engagements, to punishing frauds or gross negligence in the keeping of other people's property. So it would seem at first sight. There is something, however, a little interesting in large hoards of *money*. In a rude age a government is apt to appropriate them ; even in a civilised age it is sometimes suspected of doing so ; fifty years ago, there was a run on the Bank of France, from a report that the first Napoleon had taken all its reserve to Germany. But in general civilisation is decorous ; it is skilled in "indirections : " it has a hundred ways of accomplishing its wishes ; it is only after long study that you perceive through their seeming innocence any resemblance to the coarse actions of barbarous societies. On attentive observation, however, it will be found that few governments like to leave quite alone the money of their subjects. They rarely, indeed, keep it themselves ; but they very commonly grant a monopoly in keeping it, or a monopoly of the most profitable way of using it when kept, or a monopoly of the right of associating in order to keep it, to some persons who promise 'financial help.' Mr. Macaulay has explained to us how political in its origin was the Bank of England. A control over its subjects' money in some form almost all governments have been anxious to obtain.

As society goes on, a new temptation on this side seems to beset a government. In early society, regular industry is mostly carried on with people's own money ; there is no great facility in borrowing much ; no one has much to spare : those who have, are anxious or usurious in lending it. As civilisation progresses, this alters. Large sums of money, by the agency of credit, accumulate in few hands. The holders of these have necessarily great power over the national industry. By the amount they choose to lend, they settle, for the moment, whether that industry shall be much or little ; by the selection of the persons to whom they lend, they can stimulate one trade or another—one department of industry or another. Few governments have liked to leave this great power uncontrolled ; they have striven by laws to keep it in check, by monopolies to keep it in hands which they can trust, likely to use it as they wish. Some power over it they have commonly thus succeeded in retaining.

If there be any truth in these remarks in general, it is per-

haps in France, at the present moment, that we should expect the realisation of them. We repeat, till we are tired of repeating, that the government does every thing in France ; that police-regulation there extends through human life ; that even small undertakings are not protected by their minuteness from *surveillance* ; that, in important undertakings, the State has the habit both of taking the initiative and keeping the check,—at once of giving the impulse and of watching that it does not go too far. This is not a feature of the present despotic government only. M. de Tocqueville has shown that a network of administration similar to the present existed before the first revolution. It existed equally under the Legitimist monarchy, the Constitutional monarchy, and the Republic ; and its activity was pretty much the same under them all. No one can expect that a power so important, so convenient, so tempting as that of *money* would be left without government supervision ; on the contrary, we should expect the State to take a first place, to assume what is called the “leadership of industry” as a matter of course and at once.

The character and antecedents of the present ruler of France do not diminish this expectation ; on the contrary, they would increase it. He has been called a free-trader ; it would be truer to call him a *free-spender*. No one can go to Paris, or, we believe, to any of the largest towns in France, without seeing great signs of the vast industrial works he has undertaken ; of new streets and new public edifices ; of an immense expenditure in employing labour. Although he appears, perhaps, to understand the maxims of Adam Smith, as far as they have reference to foreign tariffs, better than any former French Government, he has not shown any leaning towards them in matters of internal traffic. On the contrary, a natural taste for large expenditure seems to indispose him to admit the idea that the daily petty savings of a country are the narrow limit of its public efforts. Socialistic notions, too, from a very early period have had an influence—how great an influence he is too reserved to give us *data* for saying—upon his mind. He would evidently escape from the *régime* of competition if he could. His very position, according to the view which he so often inculcates of it, as the omnipotent chief of a democracy of which he is the representative, of a people which has exhausted its mission in appointing him, would incline him to take a view rather similar of matters commercial,—to approve rather of a single association which should embody than of competitive units which should constitute and compose the national industry. In a hundred ways the close narrowness of an anxious despotism shrinks from the free energetic play of internal

commercial freedom. Still more important, in this point of view, is the composition of his court. Obvious circumstances separated him from the literary and oratorical statesmen of the monarchy: he wished to be served by those who were essentially and peculiarly men of business; they would have been out of place in a dumb administrative government. The Legitimist families, even if they had been trained in habits of action, have not commonly given their adhesion to a dynasty claiming under the people. The Emperor was almost compelled to choose his most conspicuous associates from the ambitious wealth of the country,—from commercial men, who wish to make money in order to be able to spend money,—whose aim it is to obtain a high social, still better, a court life, from the sums and labours of trade. A spirit of speculation has ever characterised such men. A haste to be rich is part of their essence; and such as are thus in haste, even if innocent, will never be cautious. In France, too, the spirit of Bourse speculation had deeply penetrated the political classes: the name of De Morny explains what we mean. No kind of persons could be imagined to whom the control and management of large sums of money would be more agreeable, or in whose hands it would be more dangerous.

These circumstances account for the inclination of the French Government to obtain the control of its subjects' money. A part of their law supplies the means. By the Code, a public company with limited liability (oddly called *société anonyme*, in contrast to private partnerships with individual names) can only be obtained from a government-board, which is absolute in practice as well as in theory—which can refuse applications without reason shown, and grant applications without giving an explanation. It is clearly therefore within the competence of a government to give certain of its friends, some of those with whom it has influence, some persons from whom it thinks it can obtain advantages, a real and strictly legal monopoly of a privilege of which able traders will make skilful use, and thereby probably a practical monopoly of certain branches of trade. The circumstances are different from what an English trader would suppose. The French law of commercial association does not allow of companies with transferable shares, but with unlimited liability, of which we have so many. Limited liability is—oddly enough to our notions—made essential to a company, to the division of the capital into shares, and to their transferability at the pleasure of the holder; and in practice, accordingly, is an essential condition of great partnerships. It is true, the *société anonyme* is not the only form in which this limitation of liability can be obtained; partnerships



*en commandite* have likewise the privilege of transferable shares; but the division of the partners into two classes—one of which is unlimitedly and the other only limitedly responsible—however suitable in small undertakings where all the partners know one another, is practically difficult to manage on a large scale, where the interests of the two classes may seem to be in conflict, and where the unworking partners may not, when it comes to the point, quite like to give up the absolute control over the entire management, though its exclusive possession is one of the conditions upon which the working partners have agreed to be solely subject to an unlimited responsibility. There is little chance of a large *société en commandite* arising to compete with a *société anonyme* specially favoured by the State. Even if nothing else, the insensible influence of a foreign government forbids. Practically the French Emperor has the privilege of conferring on his friends a monopoly of large and limited commercial association.

The *Association Générale de Crédit Mobilier* would be the very embodiment of these remarks, if we could believe either the boasts of its friends, or the hints of its enemies. It is a *société anonyme*. It has a special charter from the Government, which is little likely to give it a rival in its chosen sphere. Its conductors have relations, no one knows how intimate, with the courtier wealth and stock-speculating statesmen that surround the Emperor. Its object has been described as embodying the genius of commercial enterprise, "the spirit of the initiative." It boasts itself that it affords the greatest aid to the Government in national loans, and considers it a part of the "spirit in which a great establishment should be conducted"—a trait of its "liberal devotedness"—to subscribe to loans without a profit. The patronage of the best national enterprises, it alleges, is its work. Railways, canals, maritime, all the great enterprises which are to immortalise the "Emperor of Industry," it is eager to aid. Nor is it content with a commonplace way of doing so. In the spirit of industrial socialism, it regrets the isolation of these undertakings. It wishes to replace them by a single company, which should be the proprietor of all of them; at least of as many as it is able, and of all of them if it could. This design is no imputation of its enemies. The substitution of the stock of a single company for the shares and bonds of different undertakings is a point particularly dwelt on by its official expositor, M. Isaac Pereire.\* It is with this view that it receives, we are informed, deposits of the money of individuals.

\* The preamble of the statute states that the society has the object "*de favoriser le développement de l'industrie des travaux publics, et d'opérer par voie de consolidation en un fonds commun la conversion des titres particuliers d'entreprises diverses.*"

“Credit” is the instrument with which it is to work. As the public appreciate its singular devotedness, it will gain strength. Differing from the maxim of Adam Smith, “that a trader who professes to be doing good to the public rarely does good to himself,” the *société générale* will combine national usefulness with private solidity. At present, its greatest aims are in abeyance. Time is necessary to gain a position. It can only now, in a slight degree, and for a short time, aid in commercial undertakings. The limitation of its means, the number of claims on it, compel its conductors, not only to buy shares, but to sell them. The time is not yet come for a single beneficent association of industry.

On the other side we hear very different opinions. All over Europe there has been an impression that the association has been established for sinister purposes; that its disinterestedness is a pretence; that it promotes, and is meant to promote, the worst stock-exchange speculation; that even if it aided in action, the vastness of the schemes it patronises, and their number, might strain the national capital. But, in general, it is alleged that it is not intended for actual enterprise; that it does not really care for making railways or aiding canals; that its scene is the share-market. Some of these thoughts have found a very adequate expression in France itself. Restricted as the expression of opinion is in Paris, it is proportionably ingenious in finding safe vents. By tradition an advocate has a license. Keenly watchful as a government may be over the conscientious utterance of individual conviction, it has generally given a right of speech to those who do not pretend to be convinced. Those may be allowed to say what they mean who are known not to mean what they say. In Paris, the permission has been taken advantage of. A certain M. Goupo was found to bring an action against the *Crédit Mobilier* for issuing fictitious statements to raise the value of their shares. M. Goupo’s commercial character was bad, and he could not establish his action; but it afforded M. Berryer an opportunity of giving a sufficiently keen criticism of the Government company. “I do not know,” said the great orator, “if, since 1828, M. Goupo has frequented the Bourse; but suppose he has, who is it that reproaches him with it? *La Société de Crédit Mobilier*, that is to say, the greatest gambling-house which the world has ever seen. We must not be misled by words; there are magnificent ones, I know—the protection of industry, the enfranchisement of the national credit, the development of private credit, the consolidation of all commercial stocks: a dream. All that is the surface; they have given to gambling a new name; they call it in their reports the Industry

of Credit. The Industry of Credit; what is that? Their twenty-eight millions of profit; how have they been produced? They are not due to the prosperity of the enterprises in which the *Crédit Mobilier* has taken a share, and to whose aid it has brought its great influence. No; they are due to realisations which represent the difference between the price at which they sell and the price at which they buy. It is gambling which has produced them." Nor did the honesty of the administrators escape. "You are then, you say, an institution of public utility; you have limited liability, and you play; you are irresponsible, and you gamble; you are a bank of play which sees the cards," &c., &c. Such speeches are not now common in Paris.

If we turn from the eloquence of its enemies and the boasts of its friends to the actual facts of the *Crédit Mobilier*, the first surprise of an Englishman will be at the smallness of its means. Accustomed himself to very large companies, which yet neither wish, nor aim, nor are thought to have a title of the influence for good or for evil ascribed to the *association générale*, he naturally expects that the latter is a greater combination than any with which he is familiar. He will be disappointed. The capital of the *Crédit Mobilier* is not so great as that of the Bristol and Exeter Railway, not one-fifth of the capital of the Great Western, about one-tenth of that of the London and North Western. The table of its liabilities shows how narrow are its means. We may turn it into English money, as the smallness of the French coin of account gives a magnificence to what is numbered in it:

Capital . . . . .	£2,400,000
Deposits, current accounts . . . . .	4,127,172
Bills payable and sundries . . . . .	34,576
Reserve fund . . . . .	67,844
Total amount of profit realised during the year 1855, after carrying a sufficient sum to the reserve fund . . . . .	1,073,116
	<u>£7,702,708</u>

To an English trader, or an English economist, it appears idle to attempt to revolutionise industry with only seven millions or so of money. The London and Westminster Bank, a most useful institution, but strictly within the limits of pure prose, on which no one writes any eloquence, has as much. There is nothing in any other part of its financial statement which makes such an event more likely. The *Crédit Mobilier* is an ordinary chartered company, with limited liability; with 20% shares. The amount of the deposits it can receive is

limited to twice its capital. It is a bank with special design and limited means. It is true, that according to its original charter it was to be allowed to issue debentures to the amount of ten times its capital; and in the theory of the institution these were to be the great instruments of its operation; they were to be issued in exchange for the shares, or bonds, of different companies by way of purchase-money: if a man had ten shares in the Strasburg Railway, he was to sell them to the *Crédit Mobilier*, and receive a debenture of the latter by way of payment. Gradually, and in an indefinite perspective, this was to be extended, till the *Crédit Mobilier* had bought up the whole of the Strasburg Railway, and all similar works. Of course, however, a perpetual repetition of this operation would require an indefinite issue of bonds; and on the first attempt to issue them, there was, perhaps, a hesitation on the part of the public, much outcry on the part of the opponents of the company; and finally, a paragraph in the *Moniteur* quashed the operation. There is as yet no reason either to hope or to fear that the *société générale* will succeed in bringing up and incorporating with itself the shares of different undertakings.

The business of the company hitherto has been of a very simple, though profitable nature. As is shown by the above account, they have received four millions, and rather more, of depositors' money. This has been obtained by a slight variation from their original charter, by which it was only intended that they should act as bankers for public companies; they now receive the deposits of individuals also. The employment of their money has been mainly in share-speculating. Their account of assets, showing what they have done with their money, proves this; it is as follows:

Rentes . . . . .	£1,602,770	
Debentures . . . . .	1,313,784	
Railway and other shares . . . . .	2,377,264	
		5,293,818
Deducted for calls not made up to the 31st December 1855 . . . . .	1,246,668	£4,047,150
Investments for fixed periods, in treasury bonds, continuations, advances on shares, debentures, &c. . . . .	3,373,016	
Premises and furniture . . . . .	43,288	
Balance in hand, and dividends to be received on 31st December last . . . . .	239,254	
		<u>£7,702,708</u>

It is clear that the first item of 4,047,150*l.* is entirely a purchase of public and private securities, stock, shares, or debentures. It is difficult to say how much of the second item of 3,373,016*l.* is a loan on deposit of such securities, or likewise a purchase of them. All ambiguity, however, is removed by a reference to the profit-and-loss account; from which it appears that the profit obtained, or reckoned on a valuation of present stock to be obtainable, from the sales of property purchased, is 962,224*l.*\* The income derived from it, 120,816*l.* The interest derivable from other sources, including "continuations," is only 110,571*l.*; from which it is quite clear that the loan operations of the society must be comparatively trifling, and

\* The profit-and-loss account last published is as follows in English money, omitting shillings and pence :

The total amount of rentes, shares, and debentures in hand, which on 31 December 1854 was . . . . .	2,298,404
Has been augmented by purchases and subscriptions made during the year 1855 . . . . .	10,632,836
Total . . . . .	£12,931,240
£	
The amount of realisations having been . . . . .	8,680,097
To which must be added the amount of securities remaining on hand . . . . .	5,293,818
	13,973,915
There results a profit of . . . . .	1,042,675
The profits arising from commissions and interest on advances amount to . . . . .	57,099
The continuations on shares and rentes have produced . . . . .	53,472
The interest derived from various sources of investment has amounted to . . . . .	120,816
The proceeds of the reserve-fund to . . . . .	768
	Total gross profit . . . . .
	£1,274,830
For general charges, expenses of administration, and first establishment . . . . .	23,838
For interest on accounts current . . . . .	41,703
For gratuities, relief, and charitable donations . . . . .	5,559
	71,100
	1,203,731
From this amount of profit we further deduct the following items:	
Extraordinary sinking-fund on the land account, in order to bring back the amount to the purchase price . . . . .	23,612
Reductions on the cost-price of securities not quoted on 'Change . . . . .	36,838
Lastly, presumed loss upon the purchases of corn . . . . .	20,000
	80,450
	Balance of profit on 31 December 1855 . . . . .
	£1,123,281

With respect to the last deduction, M. Forcade thinks, apparently rightly, that the company had no power under their charter to speculate in corn.

that it is from the bargain and sale of shares and similar property that its profit of more than a million of some 40 per cent upon its capital has been derived. This explains the influence which is ascribed to it, and the almost terror with which it is mentioned. Seven millions and a half of money, though a trifle in works of real enterprise, insufficient to make a first-class railway, or any work which the nineteenth century would think great,—though not to English notions very vast for loans to commercial men, and for the legitimate operations of banking,—though ludicrously insufficient for “consolidating the stock of different undertakings,” is nevertheless a very large sum to be employed in share-speculating. A movable sum of that amount in the hands of clever scheming and active men (and such, it is universally agreed, are the administrators of the *Crédit Mobilier*) must be capable of producing great effects. We will not, with M. Berryer, call the *Crédit Mobilier* the greatest gambling-house which the world has ever seen; but we must regard it as a formidable speculator, a stock-exchange “operator” of the first magnitude.

Such is the *Crédit Mobilier*, according to the facts and its published accounts; and though it is very different from what the magniloquent pretensions of its expositors would persuade us to believe, the objections to it are very considerable. In the first place, it cannot but promote a spirit of gambling speculation. In a country where the direct sanction of the government is the strongest of moving powers, that government sanctions the establishment of a huge company, with the special object of speculating. It gives to this company practically the monopoly of the considerable advantages of limited responsibility. That company speculates on a large scale. It buys and sells, as their accounts show, to the extent of nine or ten millions per annum. It is impossible that this should produce no effect on excitable people. The old speculators of the Bourse—many of them the rivals of the fortunate men who have obtained the favour of the government—are not likely to submit quietly. They speculate in rivalry and in opposition to the company; the effect is a still further disturbance of the Bourse market—more rises and falls—a new opportunity for further speculation. The French are the last people who can be trusted with such a temptation. Cautious—timidly cautious as they have ever been in legitimate commerce, remarkable for a tendency to a petty and pedlar traffic, as Mr. Burke said long ago they were—gambling proper, or mere traffic in chance risings and falls of price, has ever had a great attraction for them. A lottery is always a favourite topic. Some of the soundest companies try to combine something like it with the issue of their debentures,

in order to make them more popular. Trafficking in the shares of companies with limited responsibility is exactly adapted for a people who are really timid, but are fond of the excitement of risk: it defines the amount of danger; it shows them all they hazard; it allows them the pleasure of venturing it, as well, we fancy, as most commonly the pain of losing it. At present, it is said, the mania has penetrated into a very humble class. A coal-heaver was seen, only a few days since, to come from the Bourse, in the attire of his trade, trying to read his share. To see a sort of government-company speculating; to see opposition rivals speculating; to see a great game going on, and have such sanction for playing it,—is too much for Frenchmen. They have played it.

The share-speculations of the *Crédit Mobilier* are liable to a further objection. Whatever people may do with their own money, they have no right to speculate with the money of other people. The *Crédit Mobilier* receives deposits on "account current;" doubtless the greater part repayable at short periods, if not on demand. They ought only to employ these in temporary investments—loans, discounts, short transactions, in a word—of which the end can be seen, and from which they can soon have their money returned if they want it. The special design is exactly the contrary. The *Crédit Mobilier* is avowedly intended to aid undertakings of which the duration is long and the returns slow—"opérations à long terme." It seems the most obvious common sense that a company should be sure of having for a long time the moneys it proposes to invest in lengthy operations. If the *Crédit Mobilier* were to get into discredit, if it were to have to realise the four millions of securities it now holds, it could not be sure of realising them at a profit; as the time would probably be one of diffused discredit, it would, in all reasonable likelihood, realise them at a loss. No apparent or even realised profits for one or two years can make this a generally safe and wise scheme of operations. M. Forcade has remarked that the founders of the *Crédit Mobilier* recognised a very similar obligation. When speaking of the bonds which they were proposing to issue, they distinguished between those of short date, which were to correspond to mere temporary investments which run off and bring in funds to meet the bonds as soon as they become due, and bonds of long date, which were to correspond to investments comparatively permanent. It is obvious that deposits on "current account" correspond exactly with bonds at short date in this respect. Perhaps we should say, the same reasons apply to them with augmented force, for they constitute the most vital and essential part of the whole association; if ever it get into dis-

credit as a bank of deposit, it cannot go on for a day. In his report for 1854, M. Pereire, the real head of the company, actually boasted that the fixed investments of the company had been restricted to their own capital; we should like to know how he makes out that an equal caution has been observed in 1855. The Minister of Finance, who is said, probably with truth, to be officially (the *Moniteur*, we believe, says daily) informed of all the *Crédit Mobilier* does, should look into the matter at once. No government can afford to be blind to the responsibility of founding such a company, or accepting such a supervision.

The danger of such a company as the *Crédit Mobilier* does not stop at the threshold of the Bourse, nor with its own operations. What it calls the encouragement of industry is in some circumstances a dangerous thing. Industry may be encouraged too much. The limit of the proper new investments of a country in every year is, the saving on hand from the year or years just preceding. All old savings, as a rule, are invested; the only new fund is the new accumulation. This is all which a nation can spend in a new way without trenching on old ways. The experience of 1847 has enlightened us in England about this. We then found that we were endeavouring to lay out in railways more money than we had at call. We were obliged to withdraw funds from our old trades and investments to meet our new engagements; and the time accidentally coinciding with that of a deficient harvest, and finding many old and mismanaged houses living on a credit which they had nothing to justify, the result was a panic. The case is that of a landowner who "improves" himself out of his income; who spends all his available money in draining, and then has no cash to meet his weekly bills. France is now learning this lesson. Mainly devoted to Bourse speculation, as the *Crédit Mobilier* may be, it nevertheless requires something to speculate with. New shares are the best means. It is a great convenience to enterprising founders of companies to have a wealthy body like the *Crédit Mobilier*, almost always ready to take a considerable number of shares. The "spirit of the initiative" helps them over the first difficulty. It answers, or, at least, did answer, for a time the purpose of the *Crédit Mobilier* to take shares; for their support is well known, and the idea that they are "backing" the new enterprise raises the price. This is the old policy of Mr. Hudson, and in excited markets it is a very effective one. The forty per cent profit which figures in the last account is, we fear, partially caused by reckoning on a value of shares augmented by the notion that the *Crédit Mobilier* is aiding the undertaking; which may be apt to be followed by a corresponding depre-



ciation when the company begins to sell, and the rumour gets abroad that the *Crédit Mobilier*, "the leader of industry," is withdrawing its support. However this may be, it is certain that a very large number of new undertakings are brought out in France, and that the commencement of these is avowedly promoted by the *Crédit Mobilier*. A well-informed correspondent of the *Economist*, writing, on the 12th July, before the straits of the autumn, and therefore without any temptation to find "facts" to account for the scarcity of money, wrote as follows: "The manner in which French capitalists and speculators are extending their relations to foreign countries, is one of the most remarkable signs of the times, and affords an astonishing contrast to the extreme timidity which characterised them a few years ago, when it required English capital and enterprise to convince them that railways in France itself might be made profitable. At present they have got under their exclusive control railways in Switzerland, in Austria, in Italy, in Spain, in Holland, and in Belgium; they have established *Crédit Mobiliers* in Madrid and Turin, are about to do the same in Lisbon, and are trying to do the same at St. Petersburg and Constantinople; they are endeavouring to obtain concessions of railways in Russia; they have established a large bank at Darmstadt, and will not rest until they get one at Constantinople; they recently got up a *Crédit Mobilier* at Brussels; and though the Government has not thought fit to authorise it for the present, they are sure of getting it sanctioned in time; they hold important concessions of mines and coal-pits in Spain, in the Rhenish provinces, and in Silesia; they hold a large, and in some cases a predominating, interest in numerous railways, iron-works, coal-pits, and banks in Belgium; they are about to establish lines of gigantic steamers to ply between different ports of France and Brazil, the United States, the West Indies, &c.; they are taking the lead in the project for cutting through the isthmus at Suez; and they have a pretty considerable interest in the omnibuses of London. As regards foreign enterprise, at least in Europe, they have certainly within the last few years cast the English completely into the shade. Foreigners who now want railways made, and mines worked, and banks established, or money for any other enterprise whatever, do not go to London as they used to do—they come to Paris. And at this very moment France is under engagements to supply to foreign countries at least 40,000,000*l.* sterling in the space of some half-dozen years. Now it may be quite true that this sudden fervour of the French for foreign undertakings is but one phase of the industrial, money-getting mania which now possesses them; and it is quite true, too,

that many of the enterprises they take up are regarded less on their intrinsic merits than as an additional element in stock-jobbing operations on the Paris Bourse. But still it is a question whether Englishmen have not of late shown somewhat too much supineness in foreign commercial affairs generally; and whether, in particular, they have not fallen into the habit of regarding French railways, French *Crédit Mobiliers*, and French every thing, as the only matters worthy of interest on the entire Continent." The domestic investments have not been trifling. M. Rouher, the Minister of Finance, has recently explained to us what the cost of French railways has been :

From 1852 to 1854 (both inclusive) was	£27,915,112
In 1855	19,424,206
„ 1856	19,154,228
	66,493,606
Total . . . . .	66,493,606

The whole previous expenditure of France on railways was very much about the same sum; so that during the reign of Louis Napoleon, France has expended on this sort of investment as much as she had before expended in all her previous history. This would be a great effort for a country not very renowned for commercial activity, even if it stood alone; but we must add to it all the expenditure on public works, edifices, and useful undertakings in various parts of France, and in Paris especially, which mark the reign of the present Emperor. It is impossible that this vast outlay should not try the resources of any nation. The recent scarcity of money proves them to have done so. Even in that which the *Crédit Mobilier* considers its peculiar usefulness, it has probably been an unnecessary stimulant, administered just when there was occasion for a warning and a restraint.

It is to be remembered likewise, that these great undertakings are commenced either during, or just after a long war. It is difficult to imagine that they should not strain the movable resources of a country which is not rich in proportion to her political importance; whose saving classes would be terrified at the idea of their money going abroad; where the system of banking is so imperfect as to leave much money in the keeping of the original accumulators, under the thatch of houses, or in corners of cottages, in hands and places where there is no chance of its becoming available.

So far, therefore, from considering his encouragement of industry as one of the great titles which will ennoble (for so his admirers teach) the reign of Louis Napoleon in the eyes of a distant posterity, we believe that the foundation of such an

institution as the *Crédit Mobilier* with a particular view is utterly unsuitable to the proper aims of a government, and is likely to be very mischievous. Already, indeed, it seems to have produced great evils. Although the legitimate commerce of France is, according to the best-qualified judges, extremely healthy,—while its real merchants and shopkeepers are driving a steady business, neither wishing for unusual credit nor entering into unusual speculations, the rate of interest has been higher than has been known for many years. The legitimate trader has been stinted. Some of the capital usually advanced to him has been withdrawn from the country, some sunk in railways at home; but the greatest demand has been on the Bourse to meet an extravagant and mischievous craving for accommodation from persons who have entered into speculations beyond their means, and who are endeavouring to avoid the certain loss of immediate realisation by paying any rates for the necessary loans. The whole sound, saving, laborious industry of the country is crippled to meet the wants of some speculators, who wish to scheme and spend, but not to save or work. This would be dangerous in any country, but in the present state of France it is especially dangerous there. Nothing is more striking in M. de Tocqueville's new book than the cold and guarded melancholy with which he regards the increasing inclination of his countrymen for money-making pursuits. It is one of his objections to a combination of equality and absolutism, to a despot appointed by the democracy. "Men in such countries," he tells us, "being no longer connected together by any ties of caste, of class, of corporation, of family, are but too easily inclined to think of nothing but their private interests, ever too ready to consider themselves only, and to sink into the narrow precincts of self, in which all public virtue is extinguished. Despotism, instead of combating this tendency, renders it irresistible; for it deprives its subjects of every common passion, of every mutual want, of all necessity of combining together, of all occasions of acting together. It immures them in private life: they already tended to separation; despotism isolates them: they were already chilled in their mutual regard; despotism reduces them to ice.

"In such societies, in which nothing is stable, every man is incessantly stimulated by the fear of falling and by eagerness to rise; and as money, while it has become the principal mark by which men are classed and distinguished, has acquired an extraordinary mobility, passing without cessation from hand to hand, transforming the condition of persons, raising or lowering that of families, there is scarcely a man who is not compelled to make desperate and continual efforts to retain or to

acquire it. The desire to be rich at any cost, the love of business, the passion of lucre, the pursuit of comfort and of material pleasures, are therefore in such communities the prevalent passions. They are easily diffused through all classes, they penetrate even to those classes which had hitherto been most free from them, and would soon enervate and degrade them all, if nothing checked their influence. But it is of the very essence of despotism to favour and extend that influence. These debilitating passions assist its work : they divert and engross the imaginations of men away from public affairs, and cause them to tremble at the bare idea of a revolution. Despotism alone can lend them the secrecy and the shade which put cupidity at its ease, and enable men to make dishonourable gains whilst they brave dishonour. Without despotic government such passions would be strong : with it they are sovereign."

If the commerce were of the healthy and legitimate sort which is based on regular industry, this criticism might need qualification. It might be thought to be the expression, if not of a disappointed man, yet of a disappointed literary class. But there is nothing to be alleged against it if the commerce be one of mere bargain and sale, if it lead to no healthy industry, if it foster the desire of gain without the labour which ennoble it. As times go, the making of money by work is perhaps the most innocent employment of man ; but no passion is so dangerous as an avarice which is at the same time inactive and intense.

Such are the evil consequences which a government almost inevitably draws upon it by attempting to control or direct the natural industry of individuals. The aim at a monopoly, as we know, is a mistake. Great evils may and do arise under the *régime* of competition, but they are self-corrective. Certain persons attempt to make a profit in a mistaken way. The issue proves that they were wrong : they fail. Wiser men who never shared in the belief, timid men who wished some one else to try it first, are unaffected. The world profits, or might profit, from the experience. The operation of a single large company is very different. It runs its career alone ; it does what no ordinary trader would attempt ; neither its failure nor success are guides to ordinary commerce. We need not touch what even Mr. Cobden now calls the tedium of a free-trade argument. The very evils of competition instruct the competitors ; the failure of a monopoly can only instruct the monopolist, and him it destroys.

There is this amount of excuse for the government of Louis Napoleon, that the previous banking system of France is so much tainted with monopolies, is so intimately connected with

the State, that it would have been very difficult at once to have emancipated it; still more difficult to have performed on a sudden any great works except by extending it. We will show shortly how this is. The accommodation given to trade is principally in the hands of two great companies — the Discount Company, or *Comptoir d'Escompte*, of Paris, and the Bank of France. We will say a few words on each.

The *Comptoir d'Escompte* originated in the disasters of 1848. Nothing suffers from revolution like a bank. Banks live on credit; revolutions destroy confidence. When poor people fight, moneyed people wish to see their money: it is not you who distrust your banker; you are sure he is quite sound; you only want your money: his house may be broken into, the public are so unreasonable; *they* might ask for their money, and you in consequence may never get yours. This state of distrust was fatal to the discount houses of Lafitte and others in 1848—large partnerships *en commandite*, which then did a thriving trade in loans and discounts. "By necessity and prudence," says M. Forcade, "private bankers every where interrupted their operations. The great moving machinery of industry, discount, was at an end throughout France."\* The Provisional Government is not chargeable with sloth in at least attempting a remedy. The revolution happened on the 24th of February. On the 7th of March a decree was issued establishing houses of discount in the principal French towns. A decree, however, is one thing; and money wherewith to discount another. The Provisional Government could see the propriety, in terms of the decree, "of interfering, with due limitations, when citizens are desirous of uniting to form for themselves a kind of mutual insurance;" but even it could not venture to force capitalists to set up a company, or to create "confidence" by compulsory accumulations of capital. The means found to induce individuals to subscribe their money were indisputably ingenious. The decree enacts that the capital of the proposed discount-company should be divided into three equal parts: one to be subscribed by the shareholders; a second to be guaranteed by the municipality of the city in which the company was to be established; the third to be guaranteed by the government itself. Neither the State nor the municipality, it was an-

\* "Four principal houses had done, up to that period, the business of a bank of commerce at Paris. These were, the house of Gonin and Co, capital 680,000*l.*; Ganneron and Co., capital 460,520*l.*; Bechet, Dethomas, and Co., capital 600,000*l.*; Cusin, Legendre, and Co., capital 80,000*l.* The two first, in the bill-case of which were 32,000,000*l.*, in 1847, suspended payment at the same time as two other houses of the first importance, principally engaged in making advances on railway securities. Such was the vacuum which had to be filled up." —Seneuil's *Traité Théorique et Pratique des Opérations de Banque*, p. 163. Gonin and Co. is the house founded by Lafitte.

nounced, had any pecuniary object in view ; the whole profit was to belong to the shareholders. This seems a considerable temptation. Minor establishments arose in many towns ; but the principal one is that of Paris, which is now a most important part of French commerce, but of which the beginnings partook in the discredit and difficulty of the time. "The capital," says a French writer, "necessary before the *Comptoir* of Paris could commence operations, was subscribed by the end of ten days, but not without trouble ; and we may see by the circumstances of the formation of the first fund of 100,000*l.* what was the intensity of the panic. The first shares were taken, like tickets in a lottery for a charitable object, by some conspicuous capitalists, by the associations of lawyers and notaries, by insurance-companies, by benefit-societies : no one considered his subscription as an investment. It was with a capital of 103,480*l.*, of which 40,000*l.* was lent by the State, that the company began business on the 18th of March." As this sum was evidently insufficient, and the State and municipal guarantees, however valuable, were sensibly different from actual money, the ingenious projectors provided another device. By way of compelling a contribution from the parties to be benefited, the trading classes,—carrying out, as it were, the notion that the company is one for mutual insurance,—they proceeded to levy a toll on the business done. They deducted five per cent from all bills discounted, and placed the same to the credit of the parties presenting the bills, treating them as shareholders to that extent, and the five per cent as so much paid-up capital. This, on a considerable daily business, soon produces a considerable sum ; French traders were obliged to submit to it, as there was no one else ready to discount their bills. With growing confidence, the company soon established itself. The singular originality of its devices was not, however, even yet exhausted. The discount of bills is a very good means of accommodation to traders who have sold their goods ; but another is necessary for traders who have not sold, who cannot sell their goods, or who wish to hold them. This must be done by a sort of pledge of, or security on such goods being given to the lender that may assure him of repayment ; just as the purchaser's name (or other names, too) on the bill are his security in cases of discount. An English company wishing to undertake this sort of business would have had no alternative but to go into the open market and value the produce, and lend the money all at its own risk. To a French company this probably appeared too hazardous, and moreover they wished to be able to re-pledge again the securities to the Bank of France. Now the

latter has a strict rule, that for all such loans at least three persons must become liable; and in the case supposed there would be only the owner of the produce—say a silk-manufacturer—and the discount-company, who had advanced on a pledge of his silk. The silk-manufacturer is made to give a note to the company, and the company could indorse it; but without a third name on the paper, the Bank of France may not by law make any advance on it. This third name was procured by the establishment of a *Sous Comptoir* for each branch of commerce, composed of the people most eminent in that branch, who were formed into a kind of council expected to value the produce to be advanced on, and to indorse the note of the producer to whom the advance is made. Each *Sous Comptoir* is a company, with limited liability, has a capital paid up, managers, and so on; it is, in fact, a produce-bank for its own trade, and is administered by the most eminent people in such trade. The *Sous Comptoir* indorses the note of the tradesman over to the discount-company; and the discount-company, if it wishes, again to the Bank of France. The amount of advances made in this way is very considerable. We suppose limits are assigned by the company to the operations of each *Sous Comptoir*, but these are not made public; and in time of pressure there must be considerable risk of their being overstepped. When the actual advance is made by the traders themselves, there must be some danger of their fancying they ought to have more than they really ought to have. The system is not confined to mere trades in produce. The railways have a *Sous Comptoir*, 40,000*l.* of whose capital was guaranteed by the State, and the rest subscribed by the different railway-companies in proportion to their respective capitals: representatives from the different boards of directors meet and settle the advances which are to be made on the shares and debentures of each. There is not, probably, in France the same hatred between different railway-companies which we see in England; the Government has tried to map out the country so as to prevent rivalry. It would be amusing to hear the views of the London and North Western on the advances to be made on the security of Great Westerns; doubtless the battle of the gauges would be fought once more at the table of the discounting board. But the absence of rivalry makes the action of common interest still more intense; and the railway *comptoir* must have a wonderful idea of the legitimate claim for accommodation of railway enterprise.

With these aids, the *Comptoir d'Escompte* grew and prospered. After the *coup-d'état*, and with a consciousness that there was a firm hand at the helm, French trade revived, con-

fidence was restored, and banking again became easy. So great was the change, that the Government thought that the company was sufficiently advanced to be able to subsist without the guarantee either of the State or the municipality, and these were accordingly withdrawn. The credit of the company reposes now solely on a capital of 1,600,000*l.*, of which only 800,000*l.* is paid up. The discounts amount to more than fourteen millions sterling, a great sum in France; and it exercises by means of them much influence. As it was started originally by the State, and long had the State-guarantee, it acquired a prestige which no other company could at all rival; it has a monopoly of the system of *sous-comptoirs*, such as it is; and altogether, by government support, and the good fortune of starting on the morrow of revolution, it has acquired a preponderance over its competitors that is to be regretted. It gives a particular board too large a control over the accommodation of industry. No doubt, in the situation in which the Provisional Government found itself in March 1848, there was every excuse for, and temptation to, founding such a company. No one would expect persons like the members of that Government, who, if they had an opinion about free-trade, had an opinion against it, to abstain from such an intervention. A single company abolishes competition, and suits the monarchical leanings of Socialism: but these are poor compensations; though the idea may suit a theory, it works ill in the world of real business.

The history of the Bank of France exemplifies the effect of revolution—a State interference in banking—on a still greater scale. It was one of the *belles créations* of Napoleon. That great genius for organisation was most fortunate in having a country to organise. People of his eager impatient temperament commonly walk through the world with the feeling that every thing has been done before them, and that every thing has been done wrong. They feel that they could devise great institutions; but no one wishes for them: old institutions fill up the ground: absurd, cumbrous as they are, there they are; the world thinks they work tolerably well; at any rate, it does not think you will improve them with your “genius.” Napoleon’s fortune emancipated him from this difficulty. However contented mediocrity may be, it cannot be contented with nothing. The French had intentionally and unintentionally destroyed most of their institutions; not only those greater ones known in “constitutions” on a large scale, but those minor and more important ones, which form the daily framework of common society, and regulate the habitual life of individual men. These Napoleon had to provide: one mind has hardly ever set



its mark on so much of a country ; such a genius has scarcely ever had such a stage. In nothing is this truer than in money-matters. Years of revolution, war, and anarchy had done their work on all "institutions of credit." As there was no confidence, banks were in difficulties ; every body who was so fortunate as to have money was very unwilling to part with it. Under these unpromising circumstances the Emperor founded the Bank of France. How completely he intended it to be of use to, and to be controlled by, the Government, he has himself explained. "The bank," said he in the council of state, "does not belong only to the shareholders ; it belongs to the State, because it coins money : a privilege the State grants. The general meeting of the most considerable shareholders is only an electoral body, like the electoral colleges of the wealthiest people. Nothing would be more fatal than to consider them as the exclusive proprietors of the bank, for their interests are often in opposition to those of the establishment. The share which they own gives them an interest in the establishment, as a title to real property does in the well-being of the State ; but it does not always give a perception of its real interest ; it often happens that the interest of the shareholder is not the interest of the share." "I must," he characteristically added, "be master of all in which I am concerned ; *above all*, in the affairs of the bank." The early history of the Bank of France was, of course, one of trial ; but it had practically no rival ; it associated itself with,—took off the business, we perhaps should say,—of the *Caisse des Comptes Courans*, the most important body of the kind then endeavouring to subsist. As the need of the bank was great, its progress was rapid. It was founded in 1800, and in 1803 the Government believed it strong enough to have a monopoly of the Parisian circulation ; and doubtless thought very justly, that if it could obtain exclusive control over the circulation of the capital, no other bank would ever effectually compete with it there. The defeats and, at last, the fall of the Imperial Government, of course tried it heavily ; but it passed ultimately through all trials. Each Government of France, in succession, has given it support ; and each has doubtless in a measure derived assistance from it, of which the detail will never be accurately known. On the whole, however, French Governments have been more moderate, and the bank has had more independence, than would beforehand have seemed probable. Napoleon I. had, indeed, an idea at one time of alleviating the commercial consequences of his continental system by compelling the Bank of France to "advance money on the bills of all traders reputed solvent at four per cent ;" but more instructed men convinced him that

this was impossible. The Bank of course were at a very early period of their career in controversy with him as to the amount of advances to be made to government-agents, army furnishers and contractors; but on the whole, considering how tempting money is, and what a singular succession of persons have had authority at the Tuileries, the wonder is that so little harm has been done, and that the credit of the Bank of France stands so very high as it does. The events of recent times have tended to throw more and more of the business of France into its hands. After the revolution of 1848 "there remained standing," says M. Seneuil, in Paris, "only the Bank and the Exchequer." The Bank adopted a bold course in the midst of discredit and anxiety; in the midst of events which had almost annihilated other banks, it ventured even to extend its accommodation to trade, in the hope apparently both of showing its strength, and of alleviating the distress which is the first effect of every revolution. Their expectation was disappointed. The consequence was a severe run. They were obliged to ask the aid of the Government. On application and consultation, they obtained a decree making the notes of the Bank a legal tender, and giving them permission to issue notes for a smaller denomination than they had been allowed to do before; requiring, however, by way of security, that the accounts of the Bank should be weekly published, and that the circulation should not exceed 14,000,000*l.* This measure was probably at the moment necessary; in the state of confusion and panic which then prevailed, it would probably have been impossible for the Bank to have continued cash payments, and a prolonged attempt to do so would only have aggravated the necessary effects of the inevitable stoppage. The measure was not, however, sufficient. Although the Bank of France had by law a monopoly of the Parisian circulation, in the provinces there were numerous other banks of issue, which of course partook more or less in the difficulties of the moment, and also asked the Government for relief. The Government wished to adopt the same course with them as with the Bank of France, and issued a decree making their issues legal tenders in the localities in which they were situated. But this decree, almost on the face of it, could not be executed. It established local legal tenders with vague limits, which were of no use beyond those limits; which might be of use in purchases and payments at a particular town, but were of no use any where else. A national currency cannot obviously be made up of fractions in this way; all manner of difficulties would arise. If a gentleman living in Normandy had paid money into a bank at Marseilles, he might be compelled to accept payment in notes of the Mar-

seilles bank, as useless in Normandy as in Northumberland. All the money you had drawn out for a journey in the west of France would become useless if you changed your mind and went to the east of France. The Treasury was a severe sufferer; as the local issues were legal tenders, it was obliged to accept them in payment of the taxes; and it was impossible to defray the expenses of a government extending through the whole country with pieces of paper only known and only passable in parts of the country. Some further step, therefore, evidently must be taken. The course ultimately resolved upon was, to embody all the provincial banks of issue with the Bank of France, giving compensation to the former for the loss of their business, and giving permission to the latter to issue additional notes in place of those which the country banks had issued before. The effect of this step, of course, has been to throw enormous additional influence into the hands of the Bank of France; it possesses the entire circulation of the country; its influence is enormously greater than other banks'; its business is equally so; whether the accommodation of French trade shall be much or little depends on the decision of a board of gentlemen sitting in Paris. The Bank of France is what the Bank of England would be if Lombard Street had failed, and the country banks of issue were incorporated with it. A monarchy of influence it is difficult to conceive more absolute.

It is unnecessary to point out again how considerable the disadvantages are of intrusting the banking of the country so predominantly to a single corporation. A notion certainly prevails in many quarters that banking is somehow an exception to the rules of free-trade. Mr. Macaulay has distinctly given an opinion that it is a trade which can be as well managed by a single monopolist as by many competing banks. But there seems no reason why this branch of commerce should be an exception to the maxims which are admitted to govern all other branches. The monopolist bank may charge too dear, and there is no check. Under the system of competition, if the profits of banking are too high, capital flows thither from other pursuits in which the profits are less; but the profits of the single bank may be twenty times too high, and there is no help: the public must bear the tax without murmuring. The charter of the Bank of France endeavours to meet this by forbidding the Bank to charge for its discounts more than six per cent; but this, of course, is simply a mercantile usury-law, and open to all the familiar objections to that kind of laws. At times it will be as improper to charge six per cent as at others to charge ten per cent. Sometimes six per cent will be required. The attempt at this remedy is only valuable as

showing a consciousness of the danger. Again—what is very likely to happen—the single bank may continue to conduct the business on a mechanical system, without due modification, without changing with an alteration of circumstances, or meeting (as a private trader would) the special facts of particular cases. There is not likely to be a better monopolist establishment than the Bank of England. Of course, though it has, from historical circumstances and old legislation, a great predominance, it is subject now-a-days to very effective competition; yet every person practically acquainted with the subject will admit that the trade of Lombard Street, and still more the trade of England, could not be carried on without doing many things which the rules of the Bank forbid its ever doing. This seems to arise from the nature of things. Every single predominant establishment will tend to be on an inconveniently large scale,—will be managed by persons who do not know and cannot know any thing of the special facts of individual instances, and who must therefore be guided exclusively by general rules, which refer only to vague and general facts. The charter of the Bank of France even increases this tendency by laying down, as we have before explained, that it shall never discount a bill without as many as three names to it; a restriction which some French economists endeavour to defend, but which no Englishman of business will believe to be otherwise than ridiculous.

A still further danger is inherent in the system of monopoly. The single establishment is charged not only with making advances to the public, but likewise with keeping what we may call its guarantee-fund of treasure. In every civilised commercial country a vast number of substitutes for coin exist, and are used as often as coin, perhaps oftener. Possibly these may get into discredit. It is necessary to have on hand a supply of the ultimate currency—the legal tender—the offer of which closes every thing, and for which no one else can be compelled to give or exchange any thing. This is necessary likewise for international transactions. However much you may be able to establish systems of auxiliary credit at home, they will be of little use abroad. Distance, habits, and language forbid. Hitherto, though doubtless it is daily becoming less and less so, nations have been units for the purposes of trade, giving no continuous credit to one another, and requiring regular and prompt payments in cash. For both internal and external purposes it is necessary, therefore, that a reserve of coin should be kept, and of course the banker is the person on whom this function falls. All people deposit their money with him; his credit is the basis of the internal system which

is to be supported ; even the coin likely to be wanted for international purposes will probably be withdrawn from his stores ; when so large and ready a hoard is at hand, the money wanted will rarely be gathered in out-of-the-way and less accessible places. Now experience seems to show that a single monopolist body is scarcely to be trusted with this function. It performs it under no sufficient check. If a single one of many competing establishments neglect to keep an adequate reserve, it cannot but know that it risks its existence. If it get into discredit, if a time of trial arrive when the reserve is wanted, and if that reserve be not found, the result is ruin. A single predominant establishment in near connection with the State does not feel this, for it is not true. In 1797, the Bank of England tried the experiment. They reduced the reserve of notes dangerously low ; the result nevertheless was, not failure, but a license from Mr. Pitt to suspend cash payments. In consequence, during the entire French war, when from the inevitable circumstances of military undertakings on such a scale very great sums of real cash were required, the Bank of England was exempted from performing this function, and the nation was left to pick up the money for its foreign payments where it could. The same course of conduct would follow, under similar circumstances, even now. In no conjuncture would the Government of England allow the Bank of England to fail. It would grant a license to suspend Sir Robert Peel's Acts, one or both ; to have more notes than are allowed by the Act of 1844 ; not to pay them in coin, as is required by the Act of 1819. After the difficulty was over, it is probable that there would be "a committee" on the Bank ; the governor and deputy-governor would be heard, to show that it was owing to circumstances which no man could have foreseen ; an influential director with grey hair would depose that nothing similar had ever been deemed possible by the oldest inhabitant of the city of London. Reckless theorists might object ; a considerable amount of economical opinion might be brought to bear ; but though an intelligent view of such matters is much commoner in England than elsewhere, and at the present than at any former time, perhaps the Bank would even now get off, or escape only with blame and minatory eloquence. Of course, this consequence is plain. Such a fate is very different from what ruin is to a private trader. However much the directors of a large predominant or monopolist company may "desire to act on right principles," they will not perceive them with the instantaneous acuteness, they will not follow them with the nervous exactness, which may be expected from a trader who knows that his existence depends on the

judiciousness of his conduct. The reserve, the guarantee-fund, as we have ventured to call it, for meeting the cases of internal discredit and defraying the final payment of international balances, should be intrusted to persons who have the greatest possible interest in keeping it readily available and in sufficient quantity.

The connection of a single bank with a government does not render this danger less, but greater. If a government wish to patronise certain speculations, it is very difficult for a bank whose existence and monopoly depend on the goodwill of that government to refuse to make advances to aid those speculations; and by doing this to a sufficient extent it will infallibly endanger its reserve. There is little doubt but that the Bank of France, during a portion of the autumn, had reduced its reserve inconveniently low. In the accounts of the 9th October, the reserve was reduced by 2,770,000*l.*, and amounted only to 6,650,000*l.*, while the liabilities of the bank were more than 35,000,000*l.* In the face of this great reduction, the discounts had been allowed to increase as much as 2,900,000*l.* The general belief has been that this took place at the instigation of the Government, or at least of persons connected with the Government. Such hazardous banking would hardly, it is thought, have been ventured on without an explicit promise of support from the State. So deep is thought to be the interest of some of those around the Emperor in the schemes of the day, that it is imagined that promise could in all likelihood be obtained. Of course the secret of this can only be known to a few persons, and they are little likely to divulge it. What is certain is, that the great company of the Bank of France, which has received so many privileges from the State, and is required in return to take charge of and maintain unimpaired the reserve treasure on which the national credit is based, allowed that treasure to become so low as to excite very reasonable apprehensions. The *Times*, within a few days of the publication of the account, elaborately discussed whether cash payments would not be suspended. Doubtless similar anticipations would have been expressed and discussed in France, if the press had been allowed freely to argue on what for the moment most interested the public.

It is with a view of increasing its treasure that the Bank of France has made those anomalous purchases of gold which have puzzled the writers of "City articles." During the month preceding the 9th of October they expended 25,000*l.* by way of "premium on the purchases of gold and silver," and much blame has naturally been thrown on them for so lavish an expenditure. We have no desire to appear as their apolo-

gists; we have observed that the state to which they had allowed the Bank treasure to be reduced is a signal example of the danger of intrusting its custody to the good faith and good judgment of a single corporation. But it is too easily assumed that they have incurred a real loss by the premium which they have paid to obtain their money; that, of course, depends on the mode in which they have used their money. A writer in the *Daily News* of the 6th of November explained this very clearly: "The notion," he observed, "that the drain of gold from England is likely to be arrested in consequence of the presumed inability or unwillingness of the Bank of France to continue the payment of heavy rates of 'premium' is further discouraged by one simple fact, instead of the Bank's present policy being prejudicial to the interests of the shareholders, there is ample evidence that its results are highly lucrative to them. Against the direct loss certainly incurred by the institution on its bullion purchases, must be set the profits derived from the increased amount of notes which these imports of bullion enable the Bank to keep afloat. The Bank makes a clear loss of the sums paid as 'premium'; but as the metallic supplies thus fictitiously attracted cause an apparent increase in its resources, the ability of the directors to extend their discount business, or advances upon stock, leads to an amount of gain far in excess of the loss referred to. For proof of this remarkable fact, we need not look further than to the dividends lately declared by the Bank. Notwithstanding the 156,800*l.* which the administration threw away in the latter half of last year, the dividend paid by the Bank for the year 1855 amounted to 200*f.* per 1000*f.* share, or 20 per cent per annum; being the highest known during the last quarter of a century. The coupon of the first six months of 1856, notwithstanding the 112,700*l.* spent in buying gold, was 127*f.* per share; being at the rate of 254*f.* for the year, or no less than 25½ per cent per annum. We are in the habit of regarding as extraordinary the profits distributed amongst their proprietary by some of our London Joint-Stock banks; but the French National Bank, working with a comparatively limited capital, achieves results still more surprising. Compared with profits of this magnitude, how modest seems the eight or nine per cent dividend which is the utmost obtained for its proprietary by the highly-privileged yet heavily-shackled Bank of England! Without entering upon further comparison, however, we will content ourselves with remarking that the Bank of France can scarcely be expected to hastily abandon a policy which, though condemned by the laws of legitimate banking, brings in so rich a harvest to the shareholders. If, as was the case in the first

six months of 1856, the throwing away of a sum equal to 25f. per share enables the directors to raise the half-yearly dividend to the unprecedented figure of 127f., it is obvious that they can well afford to continue paying a fictitious value for gold in the English and other foreign markets." Even, however, supposing that the Bank had incurred a real loss by the payment of a premium on its gold-purchases, it might yet be contended that some such step was inevitable. The reserve was to be replenished by some means; and we are not aware that it has ever been shown that any other means would be cheaper or more effectual. It is true that the price of gold at Paris was not such as would show a profit on the import of gold from London; but if the Bank of France had bought in Paris instead of London, it appears probable that the price would have risen at Paris. The Bank, with the facts before it, chose to buy in the foreign market; and we do not see any evidence that their choice, though perhaps unusual, was mistaken. The real charge against the Bank is, of continuing too long, and extending too far, its accommodation to the enterprises of the day; of aiding in the enterprises mischievously fostered by the *Crédit Mobilier*, of allowing its treasure to become too small, of yielding to the mania of the hour.

It is to be remembered, that the Bank of France does not, like the Bank of England, hold out to the public the guarantee of an extremely large capital. The capital on which the banking department of the Bank of England carries on business is fourteen millions and a half, and they have a reserve of three millions; the liabilities are about sixteen millions. The capital of the Bank of France is about 3,600,000*l.*, and it has a reserve of 480,000*l.* Its liabilities on the 9th of October were, as we have seen, 35,000,000*l.*; a difference too enormous to need comment. Those who, like Mr. Macaulay, think highly of the establishment of a single bank to conduct a country's business, generally expect that bank to have very large means of its own;—even that advantage the Bank of France, however, does not possess.

This slight account of the two principal banking establishments of France prior to the establishment of the *Crédit Mobilier*, is sufficient to show that the present Government of France was not the first to ally itself closely with their banking system; that, on the contrary, the two had long been connected together very intimately. There was no want of precedent in France for a government wishing to interfere in any thing; for its wishing to encourage industry rapidly; for its founding a bank in order to stimulate it. This, however, though a palliation, is not an excuse. "A great government," Mr. Burke has



a remark of this sort, "should not extend a great evil." Even the Minister of Finance has now discovered that industry may be encouraged too much, that "prosperity" may be "in excess."

The injurious effect has not, indeed, been confined to France. No single European country can now outstrip its resources without affecting all others. A great deal of capital is in its essence cosmopolitan; its place is determined almost solely by a comparison of the rate of interest at different places. It is of little importance, we suppose, to the family of Rothschild whether the large means at their control are employed at London or at Paris, at Naples or at Vienna. The *Crédit Mobilier* itself is an instance; it is ready to send its money to Russia, to Vienna, to Spain. A mercantile pressure—a Bourse crisis—in one country, necessarily attracts money thither from all countries. Instead of the capitalist lending his money to an Englishman on consols, he lends it to a Frenchman on *rentes*; instead of lending on shares of the Midland Railway, he lends on shares of the Strasburg Railway. The case is similar with the most purely mercantile of securities—bills of exchange; if the rate of discount is higher at Paris than London, bills suitable for the Lombard-Street market find their way thither from Paris as easily as from Liverpool. This has been recently much felt. The scarcity of money that has marked the last few months, and has now, as we write, perhaps begun to pass away, was doubtless aggravated at London by the railway outlay of France and the Bourse crisis of Paris. How great an influence these causes had in proportion to others it is hardly possible to know. Our political economy can say that such and such causes were concurrently in operation, and that the effect has been so and so; but to resolve the forces, to apportion the entire effect accurately between them, is beyond our philosophy. The recent expenditure on the war, the increase of our trade, the drain of silver to the East, have each contributed to our poverty; how much money each has abstracted one can hardly say. Besides these causes, arising from ourselves, we have suffered because a neighbouring country, outstripping the accumulation of her resources, stimulated by a great company, urged on by a system of banking intimately connected with a Government which itself is too nearly connected with Bourse speculation, has ventured recklessly, has undertaken too much, has attracted money from the capitalists of all countries.

## ART. VIII.—STRAUSS AND GERMAN HELLENISM.

*Leben und Schriften des Dichters und Philologen Nicodemus Frischlin. Ein Beitrag zur Deutschen Culturgeschichte in der zweiten Hälfte des sechszehnten Jahrhunderts.* Von David Friderich Strauss. Mit dem Bildnisse Frischlins.—(*Life and Writings of the Poet and Philologist Nicodemus Frischlin. A Contribution to the History of German Culture in the second half of the Sixteenth Century.* By David Frederic Strauss.) Frankfurt am Main; Literarische Anstalt, 1855.

*Christian Friderich Daniel Schubart's Leben in seinen Briefen.* Gesammelt, bearbeitet und herausgegeben von David Friderich Strauss.—(*The Life of Christian Frideric Daniel Schubart, as delineated in his Letters.* Collected, worked-up, and edited by D. F. Strauss.) 2 vols. Duncker, Berlin, 1849.

*Christian Märklin. Ein Lebens- und Charakterbild aus der Gegenwart.* Von D. F. Strauss.—(*Christian Märklin. A Picture of Life and Character from the present Day.* By D. F. Strauss.) Mannheim, Bassermann, 1851.

*Der Romantiker auf dem Throne der Cäsaren, oder Julian der Abtrünnige.* Ein Vortrag von D. F. Strauss.—(*The Romancer on the Throne of the Cæsars, or Julian the Apostate.* A Lecture by D. F. Strauss.) Mannheim, 1847.

SINCE elaborating the mythical hypothesis in his celebrated *Life of Jesus*, Dr. Strauss has abandoned the proper region of philosophical and theological inquiry for more literary studies, bent, apparently, on illustrating and testing his "world-theory" by asking how it will meet the wants and measure the achievements of non-mythic actual men. There are few modern writers in Germany whose literary ability is so great. Calm, acute, and thoughtful, with a cultivated scholar-like taste, a quick insight into individual peculiarities, and great tact in presenting the strongest practical side of a speculative view, he makes up for a slight chilliness of manner by the general good sense and anxious justice pervading these biographies, and by the clear, cold, intellectual perspective that underlies his delineations. You always feel that he is applying an inward criticism of his own to the lives he is recounting; and though occasionally you wonder whether your author be himself a *man*, or only a reflective Muse candid enough to adopt the Hegelian philosophy of history, there is an interest in the sincerity of the thought, the steadiness of the hand that holds the ideal scales, and the perfect simplicity

of the style, which carries us on even through his last and least interesting work.

These writings are all pervaded by the philosophy of the writer. Indeed, we may feel pretty sure that the figures he so carefully sketches have been chosen more in order to bring out the background of thought on which he outlines them than for their own intrinsic worth. The three biographic sketches are sketches of men who, like himself, have been diverted from theology; and even the clever lecture on Julian regards the emperor almost entirely as a retrograde heathen Divine. One—and perhaps the most interesting of these memoirs, as far as concerns Strauss's own share in the authorship—is almost autobiographic, for it is a memoir of a school and college friend of his own, who had passed with him through all the stages of declining orthodoxy, and finally died a firm disciple of that semi-classical "Humanismus" (or Humanity-worship) in which the *left* school of Hegelianism has issued, and which it is now Dr. Strauss's object in life to preach. Of this little memoir, though not the earliest, we will speak first, because it affords that insight into Dr. Strauss's own history and convictions, and into the affinities of the extreme school of scepticism in Germany, which gives the true point of view for his other works.

Strauss's memoirs of Christian Märklin bears somewhat the same testimony to the German thinker's system of thought which Carlyle's *Life of Sterling* was intended to bear to the less complete and defined scepticism of our great essayist. It is a kind of protest against intolerant practical estimates of sceptics. It says, "Here is a man's life lived under the shadow of this unbelief,—can you show me any thing truer or nobler that has been nourished on your positive theology?" And Strauss certainly proves, in his own case, much more successfully, we think, than Carlyle, that his friend did share to the uttermost the desolating scepticism of his own mind. Nor is the picture of Märklin, though not coloured with that remarkable genius which makes Carlyle's work a permanent literary possession, at all less noble and fascinating than that of the radiant-minded, elastic Sterling. But while it was Sterling's gift (being "rich," as Carlyle calls him, "in cheerful fancies, in grave logic, in all kinds of bright activity," "beautifullest sheet-lightning, not to be condensed into thunderbolts") to flash genial light on the stormy and despondent irony of his friend, it was apparently Märklin's part to supply to the lighter Schwabian temperaments of his circle something of the tenacity of purpose and maturity of judgment which is best calculated permanently to bind a group first drawn together by common adherence

to a school of colourless thought. It was the strong texture of his character which made Märklin the centre of his set of dreary Hegelians, which marked him out in that school of thin impersonal dialecticians as "distinguishable, honourable, and lovable, amidst the dim common populations." Märklin's character has great and noble features. Nor is it very easy to see how he can have felt drawn to the knot of Tübingen thinkers, of which Dr. Strauss has since become the leader. Indeed, it gave him no lasting satisfaction. Dr. Strauss himself represents his friend in later life as taking up the very same intellectual position which Carlyle has assumed in England. He turned away from a philosophy he found helpless, and a theology he believed to be false, into bitter satire on the helplessness of the day; holding up men of other ages for partial idolatry, and puzzling himself as to the sources of their health. History "still has truth; take refuge there," he said. He called on men to look away from the present confusion and morbid disease, to the free healthy public life of Greece and Rome. Had Germany a like public life, they might, he thought, be inspired to like sacrifices; but how to get such a public life without conditioning for impossible spiritual beliefs?

Christian Märklin and David Frederic Strauss were prepared together in the same Wirtemberg seminary from boyhood upwards for pastors of the German Protestant Church. It was between the years 1825 and 1830 that they studied together in the theological faculty of the University of Tübingen, and there arrived at those semi-Teutonic, semi-classical faiths or no faiths, which, with some English modifications, have often recently been the result of similar studies in English Universities, especially at Oxford. It was just at the time when the Classical and the Christian philosophy and literature were beginning to unite at their very fountains in human reason. Till now Christianity had come with a weight of external authority which scarcely rendered a real amalgamation possible. Classical literature had often floated like a kind of superficial oil over the stormy nature of both Catholic and Protestant scholars,—nay, sometimes it formed the deeper character, while the Christian element rose to the surface: but the two had never yet really mingled; they had totally different spheres; biblical and ecclesiastical authority enforced Christianity, while mere literary taste drew men to the classical learning: the former was considered part of the fact and institution of life, the latter was ornamental culture. But as soon as the deeper question as to biblical authority began to be raised; when sceptics picked holes in the authenticity of Scripture, and believers found themselves obliged to found the main authority

of Christianity in its appeals to the conscience and spirit of man,—then the Greek philosophy and the Roman type of character appealed on more equal terms to the mind of the student. They too might, so far as they could, approve themselves to the reason and conscience; if their chance of success was very unequal in degree, it was not wholly different in kind. When Schleiermacher was preaching a Christianity of sentiment, and Hegel demonstrating a Christianity of abstract reason, and even the highest adherents of the old school had to yield many essential points to the historical criticisms of their opponents, it was not possible wholly to refuse Plato's claim to be heard as a religious teacher, or to turn back the heroic types of Roman character with an intimation that they were not admissible claimants for a Christian's reverence or emulation; for they too, if they could establish a hold on the reason, might force their way into the new Christian philosophy; or, if they could touch the conscience and affections, would stand on the same basis with the remodelled Christian religion.

And it very soon began to be apparent that a thoroughly new struggle between the Classical and Christian types of thought—so far as they were distinct—was really beginning in Germany. 'Candidates of theology,' who had been taught to appreciate Classical literature more thoroughly than Christian creeds, first sublimated their ecclesiastical *facts*, and then renounced all that was characteristic even in the faith itself. "All the young men," says Dr. Strauss, "who along with Märklin constituted the flower of the youth" then preparing for the theological classes in Tübingen,—“that set alone excepted which dreamt itself over, without experiencing any shock, from the Classical poetry into the Christian,—found their way, after a longer or shorter term of ecclesiastical service, into the class of teachers, or the private life of literary authorship.” And in accounting for his friend Märklin's remarkable influence over this set, he goes on to say, "Many caught new ideas more quickly, but none worked them up more thoroughly; many surpassed him in memory, but few transformed their knowledge so completely into flesh and blood as he did. *In reading the classics his own mind became antique*, just as, later on, the study of philosophy turned in him to practical wisdom. His fellow-students early perceived that here there was really a *character* in process of formation. When there was a dispute to settle, a moral collision to disentangle, it was his opinion that was eagerly asked for, and respectfully and trustfully accepted." Strauss, Märklin, and their set, found little in the teaching of the Tübingen professors to modify the force with

which the new thoughts of Schleiermacher and Hegel seized on their minds. There is something wild and wayward in the influences of a German University, totally distinct from those of our own similar institutions. They have no stately overpowering Fellows or Dons,—only learned students, about as shy and awkward as their pupils. There is no settled, grave, immutable public opinion, keeping watch and ward over individual eccentricities, and setting practical limits to social and gregarious tendencies. There are enthusiasms which spread like wildfire, but no standing checks to such enthusiasms in the decorum and reserve which keeps a certain castle of retreat always open to the English student. The German students are like the masses—a great and often coherent democracy, always conscious of its power, within certain limits subject to compulsory laws, but scarcely under the *influence* of the University government. They attend when they please, and as long as they please, the only limit being the necessity of securing a certain number of certificates of attendance for future use. They work hard, but confine themselves to their favourite studies, and resist and reject influences foreign to their nature, and so get great *attainments*, but little *culture*. They wander about in the woods and hills, and work, and quarrel, and drink, and listen to their favourite orators in the lecture-room, and are a *people*. Nowhere is impulsive freedom so unlimited, elastic, and social, as in a German University. The professors and theologians of an old and unpopular school get empty benches and empty churches. Märklin, for instance, used to read Hegel to his set at Tübingen at the very hour when his old-school uncle preached in the University church; and often made that anxious relative sigh over his nephew's downward tendencies, when they met, just before service—Märklin, with the heretic philosopher's book under his arm, bending his steps *away* from the church which the sensitive divine was approaching "clad," says Dr. Strauss, "in the Genevan gown and the power of the spirit."

It is very curious to note how the Greek culture amalgamated with the German wants in all the literary and religious tendencies of the day. At first sight there is little analogy between the two peoples: the one lively, witty, graceful, definite-minded, quick-eyed, external; the other hearty, earnest, awkward, mystic, contemplative, inward:—and still less between the character of their religious admirations. Yet it is evident that the modern German speculation has taken its impress very much from the Greek schools; and it is still more certain, that even when men like Strauss and Märklin have totally given up "every thing objective" in religion, they still

continue to make it a real religious obligation to strive at bringing the private and social life of Germany back into the classical mould. Thus Strauss quotes for us his friend's favourite motto, taken from *Don Carlos* :

“ His spirit kindles for a newer virtue,  
Which, proud, and sure, and for itself sufficient,  
To no faith goes a-begging.”

And adds the following passage, which expresses, at greater length, a similar conviction : “ That greatness of moral disposition which distinguishes the true *antique* characters,—a disposition which seeks the good for its own sake, and is satisfied in the possession and enjoyment of it alone,—is to be found seldomer amongst *us* ; and it cannot be otherwise, as long as it is a kind of article of faith among us, supported by the Church, that the weakness of human nature requires other motives to good beside the beauty of goodness itself ; while Philosophy, with her injunction to do good for its own sake only, is laughed at as moonshine.”

There can be no doubt that one point of sympathy, both practical and intellectual, between the old Greek culture and the modern German is, the common passion for *freedom* in the two nations. During the same years when Strauss and Märklin were maturing their Hegelianism in Tübingen, Goethe was reading Guizot, and praising him for saying that “ the Germans introduced the idea of personal freedom, which was peculiar to this people more than any other.” “ Is not that good ? ” said Goethe to Eckermann ; “ and is he not quite in the right ? and is not this idea as operative as ever in the present day ? The Reformation originated in this idea, and the *Burschen* conspiracy on the Wartburg also—wisdom and folly alike. The motley character of our literature, the passion of our poets [and philosophers ?] for originality, and the belief of every one that he must strike out a new path ; again, the separation and isolation among our learned men, each one standing alone and starting from his own centre,—all this is due to the same thing. The French and English, on the other hand, hold much more together, and are much more inclined to follow lead. They aim at some similarity in dress and behaviour. They fear, indeed, to differ widely from one another, lest they should excite remark, or even seem ridiculous. But the German does every thing of his own head, and only cares to satisfy himself : he never asks about other people, for in all of them lives, as Guizot has rightly pointed out, the idea of personal freedom ; out of which, as I said, proceeds much that is excellent, but also much that is absurd.”

This is a very striking and true description of the German

passion for freedom ; and yet it points to a real difference between the *kind* of freedom, both practical and intellectual, which is the characteristic passion of Germany, and that which was the characteristic passion of Greece. The German love of liberty springs from the intense elasticity of their own impulses, which rise up against any actual suppression, and throw it off with one violent spring. It requires to be thwarted before its power is felt. The German heart and intellect is at first yielding, and any thing but dogged. There is no hard metal in it. But only try and compress it, and then you feel its power ; the more it is apparently conquered, the greater is the explosion ; it gathers all its force under the sense of constraint, and cannot rally it *until* it has felt the constraint. It is not a dread of the *dishonour* of servitude to another, such as was the root of the Greek love of liberty ; it is not *dread* at all ; it is reaction against actual present confinement. The German states did not rise against Napoleon as Greece rose against Xerxes. They waited to be subdued first in the tamest fashion, and then blew up under the yoke. The Greeks felt that it was *shame* and infamy to be under a foreign rule ; but, once fairly suppressed, they were apt to lose heart and submit. The Germans have but little acute sensitiveness of this sort to the degradation of compulsion. They will accept subjection at first as a fate, and go down into the depths of humiliation under it. But the bigger the weight, the more surely will they throw it off. The Reformation is a case directly in point. There was no jealousy of *Rome*, no deep-rooted conspiracy, no national revolt against the alien rule (as was the case in England), no stern indignation against Catholic ambition. To the last Luther was anxious to avoid a schism, and would have been content to have obtained a partial lightening of the galling sacerdotal slavery in which the spirit was bound. It was the chafing of the iron law against spiritual impulses, not the irritation of a *foreign* rule, which brought on the collision. Rome pressed too hard ; and so the whole roof of the church was blown off, when but one or two open skylights might probably have saved it. It is constraint, not specially extraneous constraint, that is the antipathy of German spirits ; scarcely will they endure any kind even of *self*-constraint. Their desire is to be "a law unto themselves," not in the sense of imposing their own laws, but of endowing all that is spontaneous with the sacredness of law. Every thing naturally sacred in Germany is of spontaneous growth : they professed a religion of *faith* because it was more spontaneous (more free) than "works of the law ;" and later on a religion of sentiment, because it was more spontaneous than *faith*. "In fact," says Strauss,



in the life of his friend, "Schleiermacher's thesis, that no confession of faith asserts any thing primarily concerning objective facts, but only concerning a state of our own pious feeling,—far removed as Schleiermacher himself was from drawing the ultimate inference it involved,—was a great liberating announcement for German theology."\* And you see just the same tendency, in still more startling fashion, in their systems of philosophy. All the genuine German systems are as it were *insurrections* of the Reason against the pressure of external laws of causation,—attempts to repudiate the merely receptive attitudes of intelligence, and to show that the universe is only the reflection of its own spontaneous activity. "The universe takes all its shape and colouring from your own Reason," says one; "therefore examine that, and you will find you cannot get beyond the painted windows of the imagination." "It is your own Reason, and nothing else," says another; "be assured that the laws of what you call Nature are nothing more than laws of personal consciousness." "Nay, the world is Reason in *one* stage, and the mind is Reason in *another* stage," says a third thinker; "and if you will but note the process of rational activity, you shall see it pass from the one stage into the other: there is a primary intellectual impulse,—a methodical march of reason,—which is the key to matter and spirit alike; only apprehend this, and you can make Reason unfold again its own eternal history, and explain the whole logic of creation,—from yourself up to God."†

Now of this boundless and blind elasticity with which German faith and reason spring up against every semblance of constraining law, disowning all limits except the variable limits of spontaneous impulse, there is little trace in the Greek literature; and for this very reason we suspect there is an additional charm to the Germans in the study of Greek ethics and traditions. They find enough sympathy with their

\* An Englishman would say, perhaps, that its tendency is rather to liberate from theology, than to liberate theology.

† An Englishman, when he first opens Hegel's or Schelling's Physics, for example, is tempted to doubt the sincerity or the sanity of these metaphysic constructors of the universe. Thus, for instance, Hegel says that light is abstract self-identical matter, and the sun is individualised light. "The sun is not a concrete. Piety would place men and animals and plants on the sun and moon; but only the planet is really capable of producing them. Natures which have gone into themselves,—such concrete forms as are in themselves self-sustaining against the universal whole,—are not to be found on the sun: in the stars, in the sun, there is only material light." This is a new and rather hard argument for Dr. Whewell. Hegel also lays it down *à priori* that the sun's light only acquires heat by coming in contact with its "opposite," the dark planetary bodies. *Cyclopædia*, vol. ii. p. 135. We could quote far more astounding metaphysical physics; but the glimmering of real meaning in the notion that the sun is *perhaps* too little complex a world for organic life, will make this illustration a trifle more intelligible perhaps to non-Hegelians.

mode of thought to feel that it expresses many of their own wants; and enough difference to feel that they have still, with all their Christian culture, much to learn from them. There was a great craving for freedom in Greece; but it was not exactly the impulsive freedom of the Germans: it was a voluntary freedom,—not a desire to be set at liberty from all restraint, but to solve the problem of a worthy *self-restraint*. And Christianity, accidentally though not essentially,—especially as taught by its great German prophet,—has sometimes been too much an appeal to personal impulses of love, to the desire to *lean* on a wholly external Divine arm, and has too little kept in view the truth that God does not merely *lend* moral strength to men, but *gives* it to them—puts it gradually into the very fibre of their own individual character, and will transform them by degrees into some faint likeness of His own strength, if they will only ever look to Him when that strength fails. Now this has been really a side of divine truth which was more truly perceived by the Greeks than by any other nation: the very imperfection of their revelation may have given this side of truth a larger proportionate value. They felt that it was possible and necessary to gain a personal and individual rectitude—strength of character—power of will to do right. Christianity has taught us to look so immediately to the sources of *help* in our weakness, and to understand the whole depth and breadth of our weakness with so much intensity, that it has almost blinded us to the infinitesimal increase of personal strength which right action really gives. The Lutheran version of Christianity is especially liable to this charge. It has represented man as a wholly and utterly dependent being, capable only of leaning, never intended even to stand alone. To thinking Germans, conscious that this was their weakness, that impulses were good and deep within them, but voluntary power almost infantine—an aspiration after self-rule, even almost a disgust at the Lutheran doctrine of complete self-distrust and borrowed righteousness, would be in time nearly inevitable. Even Schleiermacher's sentimental religion of aspiration would be no better. They desired, not merely to lean on God, but to become like God, to culture a germ at least of voluntary self-reliance. It was something of this kind, though in an untrue and exaggerated form, that Strauss and Märklin felt so keenly; that Schiller himself was feeling when he wrote the lines in praise of a "self-sufficient virtue, that will go a-begging to no faith," and which has constituted the better element in the fascination of that Hellenistic gospel which the two poets of Weimar were wont to preach. It is most true, indeed, that at the *advancing margin* of moral life we can

never hope to stand without leaning on the Divine arm ; that to attempt it is but stoic pride, which deserves to fall. But it is surely not stoic pride, nor in any way dangerous, to say that there ought to be a conquered spiritual area for every man, within which he has not merely strength *lent* him to stand upright, but strength *given* him, of the essence of his own nature, which he could only again *lose* by a downward process of voluntary degradation. The Greek (and Weimar) aspiration after a power of self-mastery expresses a real craving, to which Christian theology has scarcely given its true scope ; and it was not without cause that Märklin complained of the Christian pietism of his day for its tendency "to conceive the Divine will as a power only acting on the Christian from outside his personality, and *the self of the believer as merely the channel through which the Divine Spirit flows ;*" or again, that the human will is a "mere empty vessel, which only, according as it is influenced by Christ or Satan, gets the *appearance of being filled by real contents.*"

It is clear that much of the new influence of classical culture over the minds of the heretical school at Tübingen and elsewhere in Germany was due to its noble, if exaggerated, doctrine of *independent* rectitude. To minds trained in a Christian school, where the involuntary principles of aspiration or trust were alone insisted on, the vision of Prometheus chained to the rock, and resisting with eternal fortitude the arbitrary command of a physically omnipotent master, was in itself a new and refreshing religion. It was just this fortitude and this strength that the German nation needed, and had not. It was simpler, deeper, more affectionate, more humble, more capable of trust ; but it could never have had that among the many fine mythic traditions of its infancy. Painful endurance—right as right without the help even of love—in short, an impersonal, lonely, self-isolated rectitude, had not entered into German natures, and had not yet been distinctly brought out of their Christianity. Goethe, in his fine fragment *Prometheus*, gives a perfectly new colouring to the myth, by turning it into a revolt against moral and religious *dependence*. He makes the Titan, in the bitterness of his heart, admit the power, love, and care of Zeus ; but assert his right and power over his own spirit and activity, and reject with scorn the proposal to sacrifice this to a state of childish dependence even on the father of gods and men. He goes *beyond* the Greek myth : it is not with him as with Æschylus, a resistance to arbitrary hatred and injustice,—it is an assertion of the right to a limited sphere of free *uninfluenced* activity, within which not even the gods shall meddle. This was very characteristic of

the state of German religion, and indicates one centre of the really healthy fascination of the Greek literature over their minds.

The other centre of fascination was mainly in the *homogeneous* culture of all human powers, physical as well as mental, which came into the antique ideal of human life. In Plato's time there was already beginning that tendency to depreciate practical life which marked the decay of the nation. But the Hellenistic literature, as a whole, is singularly homogeneous; and this gave it its great charm to the Germans, who, as a nation, more even than ourselves, had been mistaught to divide life into two halves, the spiritual and the secular. Reaction from this falsehood gave in great measure that impulse to pantheism, which was universal amongst thinking Germans during the time of Schleiermacher and Hegel's teaching. Strauss and Märklin, while theological students at Tübingen, embraced pantheism in the distinctest form, and never abandoned it except for that melancholy logical development of its principles, according to which "religion is no longer a need for the philosopher at all, his religion being the restoration to unity in thought of the connecting Idea that seems broken to pieces in the multiplicity of phenomena." It was not, however, till long after their college life that they attained this "more accurate" definition of the philosophical essence of religion. But the real force which drove the church of that day into pantheistic lines of thought was the narrow pietism which represented "this world, this life, as merely temporal, transient, untrue,—while the eternal and true is not to be found here at all, but will first appear in the next world, to which all the real significance of life is postponed." It was the charm of pantheism that it denied this, and claimed the Divine Spirit as much for the visible as for the invisible,—for the outward as for the inward,—for the here as for the hereafter;—its unreality lay in destroying all personality, and therefore all evil and good. It is a curious indication of the state of thought in Germany on these subjects, that young men could at college deny all belief in the *self-consciousness* and *personality* of God, and hold human immortality as a false and "fatiguing doctrine," and yet deeply believe that they had a firm hold of Christianity, and feel (one of them at least) even an *enthusiasm* for the task of preaching it! Märklin says, in complaining to his friend of the vast difference between his own philosophical conception of the essence of Christianity and the literal sensuous form in which the laity (naturally perhaps) conceived it, "for me, in my own person, religion and philosophy are not in any way mutually destructive; but for me officially, and as a curate, they won't agree;—and

*yet every drop of blood in my veins is religious.* What am I to do?" Strauss, who was not then much troubled with this kind of scruple, exhorts him to regard the divergence of view between what he believed and what he seemed to believe, as not being *immediately* a question of morality at all, but primarily a matter of "pastoral prudence," and only "secondarily moral." This accursed practice of ecclesiastical reserves has perhaps produced more permanent distortions of moral faith in our own day than any purely intellectual tendency. When once the conscience has been dragged through the mire at the heels of a faith it has ceased to acknowledge, there springs up a radical embitterment against it, which a tardy confession never entirely allays. It has a marked influence in theological England; and one sees in both Märklin's and Strauss's subsequent bitter reaction against Christianity the rebound from this uneasy acquiescence. The same Märklin who asserted so enthusiastically in youth that every drop of "blood in his veins was religious," says, only eight years later, when he had just, and only just, definitively left the church, "my future occupation will not be one of cramped situations, as it has been hitherto. For what is all theology and church but the essence of cramp, untruth, unnaturalness? I long after the wholesome food of the old classics and history. I intend to be, heart and soul, a heathen; for here at least is truth, nature, greatness."

The two friends left the University in 1830, took pastoral duties, and corresponded about the doctrine of ecclesiastical reserves. They agreed that the gospel narratives, and, indeed, much of the language of Christianity, was, literally taken, unsustainable; but as a picture-language, shadowing forth deeper truths, was harmless, and, to a certain extent, necessary. Neither of them, however, was to sustain this self-deception long. Strauss very soon unburdened his mind in developing the mythic hypothesis of the life of Jesus; and Märklin—though less completely—by writing against pietism. Of the two minds, it is clear that that of Strauss was naturally much the more negative and also the more acute. His letters—some of which are given—have a cold and pallid tone. Theology is to him a weakness to be laid open,—a picture-philosophy. His critical eye is very skilful; but you feel that when he is scientifically examining a past faith, he has no power of conceiving it a present and living one. He has a pallid pleasure in free thought, and a cold dislike to all faith, because, he says, it essentially "ties up" man's moral agency. Märklin, on the other hand, was of a warm, restless temperament, with an intense practical belief in moral distinctions

and the immense power of the will. "Man is not constituted only of temperament and blood, but also of bloodless, dry volition," he used to say: accordingly, he worked his own will hard; and his friends complained that he was too severe in his moral expectations from others, as well as in his exactions from himself. When he left the church, in 1840, he threw himself, with something like Arnold's energy, into a school; and though he had completely abandoned all religious faith, yet the high and enthusiastic doctrine of conscience which he engraved on his pupils' minds filled them "with boundless reverence and love; and his death struck many of them as the death of a father, and made his teaching and his example a holy memory never to be forgotten." Before we leave his life, it is worth while to note the paralysing effect on so noble a mind of the religious scepticism into which he had fallen—faith in conscience being his only, though a most enthusiastic, religion. Passionately desiring to rouse and benefit men, he felt that his no-faith debarred him from almost all influence; and the alternations of eagerness and bitter despair in his letters read (though with more intensity and less humour) like the satiric tiltings of Carlyle. "If you knew," he writes to a friend, "how often my mind seems overflowing with love to man, how I long to devote myself completely to those who would love and understand me as I do them, you would think me a fanatic—or, at least, perhaps, not you, but any one else:" while at another time he says, "Standing as we do so absolutely isolated, understood by scarce two or three, and seeing the duncedom, wretchedness, and baseness of people—often of one's own people—I should often hate men, if I did not see that it would be making a dunce of myself." "If we had only a true social and political life, a State for which one could feel any enthusiasm, for which it were worth while to live, then we should soon have things different; then we should soon again have a true virtue, as the ancients had,—not this hypocritical shadow of it that we see in the present religion and morality,—but a healthy virtue, free from the hypochondriac-catarrhal discontent of the modern philosophers and thinkers, as, for instance, of us two. Yes, my dear friend, the whole age is nothing worth; and we no more than the age, except so far, perhaps, as we have the insight to know that it is worthless. All fresh energy for action, all unbroken power of will, is wanting in us: we must get ourselves well buried, that the new time may rise up upon our graves. The time is barren in every spiritual department; in philosophy and in the arts; it can only criticise, reason, lament, or belie itself. So it is: and therefore let us go into a monastery, or else

utterly bury ourselves in science." Again: "Our time is bankrupt in faith and character. The saints, like failing shopkeepers, won't open their eyes to the fact that the drawers are all empty; they furbish up their shop anew with rags and second-hand goods. We confess the bankruptcy; but we know of no help, of no new principle of life; and have not the moral strength to sacrifice life, and property, and honour. We too are no organs of the world-spirit; on us also posterity will pass righteous judgment." So stormed and wailed a laborious noble-minded man, who had exchanged faith in God for faith in a world-spirit, and then learned that *he* was not its "organ."

His restless and latterly hopeless temperament wore Märklin out early, as he himself had often predicted. The revolutions of 1848 gave him new hopes, and caused him bitter disappointment. He died of rheumatic fever in October 1849, in his forty-second year. Dr. Strauss's last words, in concluding his life, are affectionate and very characteristic, as he calmly contemplates the eternal loss: "The coffin which held the husk of so noble a spirit sank into the grave to the chant of his young townsmen. In the circle around it stood, along with his family, his friends, all of them men in the vigour of life, utterly broken by sorrow, and unable to keep back the flowing tears. Yet in this pain the spirit of the dead mounted into their souls, where it will live as long as they live themselves. Thus lives on that noble mind in all who felt his spiritual influence. But in the second and third generation the personal impress of a life so prolonged is generally obliterated. Who it was that influenced our fathers as teacher or friend, their sons do not forget; but of our grandfathers we know not even this, although the posthumous operation of those influences on us may not yet have actually ceased. Our friend, though in his modesty he laid claim to live on only impersonally in the fruits of his works, deserved for the massiveness of his nature a prolonged personal influence as few deserve it. That this may be his portion,—that in this transfigured (*erklärten*) form he may affect those also whom in his life-time his influence never reached,—is the purpose of the now-completed delineation, which a mourning friend erects as a monument on his grave."

It was worth while to go into this interesting little biography, as it gives us the requisite insight into the nature and education of our author, and the kind of influences to which he has been subjected. The themes he has selected, and the mode in which he treats them, are uniformly determined by

his philosophical views,—his contempt for theology and theologians,—his respect for the classical culture,—his desire to show that religion has no worthier solution for the problems of life than morality without religion can afford,—his wish to trace, when he can, what he considers the injurious effects of faith in opening out modes of *escape* from the natural principles of moral action. In selecting for the theme of his new work the life of the poet and philologist Nicodemus Frischlin,—a Tübingen professor of the half-century that followed the Reformation,—he has been clearly led by more than one of these motives. Frischlin's life presented the tempting prospect of dealing with a man who, as the religious zeal of Luther's time subsided, was one of the first to postpone theology to the revived classical literature, and make Latin and Greek the object of his life. More than this, his secularity of disposition got him into trouble, and brought upon him much annoyance and persecution from some of his more strait-laced colleagues in the University. His life presented, therefore, one of the first meeting-points between the ancient literature and the German, and one of the earliest points of collision between Protestant rigour and the "healthy animalism of the Teutonic mind." In addition to this, his life had a tragic close; and (greatest temptation of all, perhaps) documents—very dull ones—hitherto unexamined, were placed at his biographer's disposal. Still the result is, on the whole, rather curious than interesting, and we think it probable Dr. Strauss would never have chosen it, had he known before he had got far into his work how entirely Nicodemus Frischlin deserved to "return silently with his small, sorely-foiled bit of work to the supreme silences." As one wades through the curious petty squabbles of which the poor man's life was made up, one cannot help asking, "Why had not no-biography, and the privilege of all the weary, been his lot?" Why this conscientious German labour spent on accurately beating up for us again so many clouds of sixteenth-century dust, and showing us the soiled wayfarer, whose eye scarce ever pierced beyond them, until he was received into the "supreme silence"? It is a condition of the present to be much encumbered with life-choking detail that is not life; but in the cool and quiet past only the great conflicts, the clear outlines, the representative realities of human life, should be displayed. Had Dr. Strauss, instead of giving us this laborious account of poor Frischlin's quarrelsome volubilities, condensed the whole into a few pages of memoir, illustrative of the curious state of scholarship and social culture in those days, and of the University whose effort it was to instil that culture, he might have produced a very valuable pamphlet. But his



German passion for "materials," and that deep-rooted German belief that even lives and actions which were wasted on their own day, if they can be faithfully disinterred from the centuries, *must* be profitable to ours, has led him astray. Facts, like wine, *may* improve by keeping: but if they have no body in them at first, if they be thin sour irritants when they are committed to the ages, they are not very likely to be cheering or nutritious when they reappear from the venerable mould. Frischlin's life was evidently interesting to Strauss, because it exhibited the first external contact between the ancient literature and the Teutonic; and had he confined himself to this idea, he would have been wise. He believes that the Reformation itself was only great so far as it embodied the idea of giving to human life a freer, easier development. It is worth while to extract from his preface the passage in which he explains what he conceives to be Frischlin's relation to the "world-spirit" of his time.

"The general character, tone, and, as it were, the *illumination* of a life-picture depends mostly on whether or not it belongs to an ascending or descending period of history,—to a waxing or a waning era. Thus a fulness of presentiment, a richness in hope, the fresh gladness of an adolescent world, penetrates every important German career from the middle of the fifteenth century to the beginning of the sixteenth: men's minds are seized and carried away by the ideas of Humanism, of reformation, in part also of political reform; and though there be no lack of individual peculiarities and self-will, by which the purity of the Idea is sullied, yet the individual men continue in its service; they remain men of objective natures; and their careers, even when, as in Hutten's case, they have a tragical issue, always exert on us an elevating and even a cheering influence. But towards the end of such a period the inspiring Ideas are apt to get gradually spent, while there springs up an aftergrowth of men of fresh power, who emerge from the school of a greater generation, bringing with them unusual knowledge and capacities. And now the individuals thus gifted withdraw from the service of the Idea, or even use it as the subordinate instrument of their personal ends in laying out to the best advantage their own power, talent, or learning, or in gratifying their fancy by pursuing their own crotchets and cultivating special tastes. The second half of the sixteenth century, to which belongs he whose image we are now undertaking to conjure up, was, at least for the German nation, in every respect a period of descent. The place of the great reformers was occupied by furious theological controversialists, or ambitious court-theologians; instead of the Augsburg confession, with its simple heartiness, there were the hair-splitting, damnation-loving Concord-articles. In its first shape, therefore, the idea of the Reformation had once for all outlived itself, and could produce no more heroes; and for its resurrection in another and philosophical form the hour was yet far distant. The Idea of Humanism, which was the precursor of the

Reformation, had soon found itself overtaken, thrown into the shade, and encroached upon by the latter, which latter had, indeed, been a grievous trial to the exclusive representatives of the former Idea,—as, for example, Erasmus. Now, however, it was able to venture out again (so far as it had not been smothered in the clash of theological and actual warfare), and could try to make what profit it might out of the alienation of the clearer heads from ecclesiastical interests. . . . As the descendant of the great Humanists of the fifteenth and the first part of the sixteenth century, the hero of this biography may in the first instance be regarded. If we suppose the endeavours of those great men to have been directed less to historico-critical inquiry than to the practical mastery of the ancient languages, especially Latin, and to the intelligent interpretation and artistic imitation of the classical models, we may regard Frischlin as the culminating point of this school.”

In this last sentence Dr. Strauss well describes the character of Frischlin’s services. But he cannot properly be said to have belonged to the school of Erasmus, who had fine literary taste and insight, while Frischlin’s talent appears to have seldom got beyond a quick ear for metre and a good grammatical appreciation of the medium of literature—words. His was a rough German nature, of no delicacy and little depth. Some fresh and ready popular humour he undoubtedly had, but little, if any, other poetic qualification. Of insight into men or things, into the needs of his own nature or the beauty of the universe, Dr. Strauss’s biography and quotations from his “poems” show no trace. With a vast memory for language, and, partly as a consequence, boundless volubility in giving it forth, he was in fact a capacious viaduct for pouring the Greek and Latin authors into the ears of his countrymen. They seem to have left no deposit behind them in his own mind, and to have brought away no personal colouring with them. Certainly, as Dr. Strauss says, it never struck him to “serve the Idea;” he was one of those who made what use they could of the “Idea” to forward their own ends. His real calling was that of a philological professor. His activity was as vast as his memory. He had little insight, apparently, into the subtle science of the meanings and influences of words—that is a literary gift; but he held, for his time, sound, comprehensive, and original views as to their forms. He was a Reformer of declensions, a Protestant against abuses in syntax and prosody. Some of his few German verses have vivacity and popular humour. But his total want of literary insight into classical authors whose works he yet knew completely by heart is significant. His odd mixture of heathen ideas with Lutheran theology was due, in about equal measure, we think, to his non-appreciation of the classical tone of mind and to his non-appreciation of the modern religio-

thought. The actual life of Greece and Rome was as far distant from his imagination as the actual life of Paul and Luther. He was an early type of that pre-eminent ungainliness of mind,—that strange, sprawling, long-limbed, hobbledehoyishness of faculty,—which an exclusive word-diet is apt to produce. Language-facilities are legs and arms to the mind, and will of course be very entangling and get a good deal in your way if there is no corresponding agility of the directing thought. The seven-league boots ran away with the overgrown professorial child, and led him into all sorts of swamps and pit-falls. Frischlin's essential nature was that of a coarse-grained German, and he had much more than ordinary humorous sympathy with the habits and oddities of the German lower classes. There could not have been a less fitting wild-stock on which to graft the classical learning. The two never attempted to mingle. But his learning caused (or at least immensely increased) the fustian-rhetorical element in his mind. When he writes in German, there is a simplicity and ease and real childlikeness in the verses, that remind us of the charm of the old German fairy-tales. But in Greek and Latin he could not have expressed *himself*, even if he would, any better than Mrs. Stowe's Topsy might have done in Gibbon's English. The consequence was, that he got to regard rhetoric as an art of building grammatical structures out of these foreign bricks; and the easiest plan being, not to combine the single bricks, but to take great fragments already mortared together, the art of poetry became merely an art of stringing together longer or shorter classical excerpts, more or less distantly related to some vague notion in his head. Thus he addresses Christ in one of his earliest poems as

“Christe, panomphæi proles veneranda parentis.”  
(O Christ, the adorable offspring of an oracle-giving parent.)

And in one of his latest poems he describes the Last Supper in Homeric Greek, which far more vividly recalls Ulysses feasting with the twelve children of Æolus—“the banquet steaming and the goblet crowned,”—than the most sacred of human stories.\*

Frischlin preferred Virgil to Homer, however, and maintained he could see in the Æneid a foreshadowing of all Papal Christendom: the intercession of Venus with Jupiter for the

\* *Ἀντὶρ ἐπεὶ πύσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντρο,*  
*Ἀντίκα ἡδυεπῆς ἀνὰ δαίτ' ἀνόρουσεν Ἰησοῦς, &c.*

In like taste, Frischlin had a plan for dramatising the history of Joseph and his brethren. The first part, describing the plot against him, was to be called the *Adolphi*; the second, comprehending his Egyptian adventures, the *Eunachus*; and the third, touching on the querulous troubles of Jacob, was to be the *Heautimoroumenos*.

Trojans is a type of the intercession of the Virgin and saints for the Christians; the funeral games for Anchises are a foreshadowing of masses for the soul; the temporary punishments explained to Æneas in Hades are a type of purgatory; and Polyphemus, with his one blinded eye, is a visible anticipation of the Pope. He justified his preference of Virgil to Homer because the former excelled the latter in strength (!) and brevity; Virgil having compressed the forty-eight books of the Greek into twelve. Æneas is Achilles and Ulysses *in one*, and is nobler than either; Venus happily combines the parts of Athene and Thetis; and Lavinia is many steps in advance of Helen. With these specimens of his literary insight, we may easily suppose that his dramatic ideas are not very mature. His notion of making a play was the child's method of getting something pleasant and colloquial to recite, and parcelling it out to different tongues. If the dialogue is much interrupted by the narrative, what so easy as to invent a chorus (an impersonal "voice from the closet" is, we have been informed, a favourite expedient with intelligent children in such cases, and rather a coveted part too, as it frequently has the lion's share) to fill up the gaps in the dialogue. Thus, in a tragedy from the first book of the Æneid, which he calls "Venus," the very simple device of a chorus of Nereids is invented, to do a good deal of the descriptive part, while Æolus soliloquises on his own cheerless abode. In a play that he calls "Helvetiogermani," which is similarly invented out of Cæsar's Commentaries, the battles are described by the lieutenant Labienus to his subordinates in the text of the author. Comic scenes were, however, really invented and inserted; and these, chiefly written in Terentian or Plautian language, were the salvation of the play as an acted piece—for these things were really acted. Princes and courtiers, and all University students, talked Latin in those days; and Frischlin wrote most of these performances first as exercises for his Latin class, and next for performance in Stuttgart. Sometimes they would be acted in the market-place; but then the common people took offence at the Latin; and German prologues, and German arguments, and German intercalary scenes, had to be put in to appease them. In the prologue to the play we have just mentioned out of Cæsar's Commentaries, the writer complains that the mob interrupt him by demands for German, and, if their demand is not complied with, are in the habit of setting up a rival performance on the same stage, in the form of exhibitions by rope-dancers and jugglers, which were, no doubt, vastly more amusing than Cæsar's Gallic war thrown into dialogue.

Frischlin's comic German pieces must have often had a real

humour of a good broad popular kind. There is a drama in which he takes occasion to picture the crowd of German beggars that assembled for any considerable distribution of alms. "Two beggars betroth their son and daughter after each has recounted a master-piece of roguery, and give the young people as dowry, the one, Basle and Strasburg, the other, Constance and Zurich (with the exception of the street in which he was himself accustomed to beg from house to house)." It seems likely, from a small specimen given by Dr. Strauss, that there is really no little humour in these beggar scenes. Frischlin wrote from considerable experience of the common people. But even in the German pieces, as in his letters, there is little or no trace of any thing like the feeling and pathos\* one expects to find in a German poet of the people. He had a thoroughly self-occupied and rather shallow animal nature, full of conceit, but of a simple childish kind. In his last imprisonment and separation from his family some genuine warmth of feeling comes out, but much more sense of physical misery and oppression. With infinitely variable spirits, he is easily cowed, but never humbled; he succumbs entirely and at once to actual punishment, but indulges in childish menaces while danger is at a little distance. He has all the elasticity and more than the irresoluteness of the German; he will promise any thing while pressure is on him, and change his state of mind so utterly that he *cannot* redeem his promise, nor even understand that he did really promise any thing inconvenient, when the pressure is once removed. His intense, and to companions very offensive self-admiration, gives him a strong but not deep-rooted insolence of manner, which is totally distinct from pride; for he will retract every thing with childish terror when suffering for it. Altogether, he is a simple, impulsive, passionate, tough, conceited, beer-loving,

\* The lines that are perhaps the most like poetry of the many Dr. Strauss has quoted are the following, which have some tinge of sentiment, and are contained in the little German drama we have just spoken of. They are certainly a fair specimen of the style, and a very favourable one of the substance, of Frischlin's German verses :

Wie wandelbar ist Menschenglück,  
So gar unstät mit falscher Tück:  
Jetzt ist einer hoch, bald wird er nieder;  
Jetzt ist einer arm, bald reicht er wieder.  
Die Zeit bringt oft die rothen Rosen,  
Auch bringt sie oft herfür Zeitlosen.  
Keiner soll dem Glück zu viel vertrauen;  
Allein auf Gott den Herren bauen.  
Denn wie sich das Aprillenwetter  
Erzeigt je länger, je unstätter;  
Also das waltend unstät Glück  
Stösst alles hinter sich zurück.

Our human luck it changes fast,  
Plays hollow tricks, and will not last;  
Now we stand high, and now fall low,  
Now poor, and now our riches grow:  
Time brings forth often roses red,  
And often daisies in their stead.  
Let no one trust too much to luck,  
But build on God the only rock.  
For as the spring in April days  
More changeful grows the more she  
stays;  
So changeful fortune, rolling fast,  
Thrusts every thing behind at last.

hair-brained grammarian, not without a sense of humour, but rendered immeasurably dreary by the fustian professorial element in him. With a little more love, and a little less lumber, he might perhaps have been a man of genius. We will close what we have to say of him by a brief account of his career, which his biographer states has an "epic course and a tragic close,"—a true enough statement if the essence of the epic consist, as we believe Goethe and Schiller decided, in a constant tendency to "retardation;" a tendency that realises itself a good deal to the mind of the reader. A tragic close it surely had.

Nicodemus Frischlin, in order to be educated at all, had to choose theology for his profession: there only did the government step in with a "foundation" to enable him to pass through a course of preparation for Tübingen, and afterwards through the college itself. Fortunately for him—for if he made a rash and quarrelsome teacher, he would have made a worse pastor—his extraordinary powers of acquisition and versifying procured him at once a teachership in connection with the university. He was popular with his classes, and still more popular with his Duke, for whom he wrote Latin poems, reciting the honours of the Duke's ancestry and name, and manufactured such dramas as we have spoken of,—and had a general reputation for omniscience which he diligently encouraged, unfortunately sometimes at the expense of his brother professors. Amongst his colleagues and former teachers was Martin Kraus (Martinus Crusius as he was called), a jealous and sallow person of anxious erudition. It was squabbling with this individual (or with those by him set in motion) that chiefly constituted Frischlin's "epic career;" and being hot and imprudent, he lost his battle, and impatiently brought on himself the tragic issue. The two typical professors are well sketched by our author. He is speaking first of Crusius:

"We find in him a learning which remained fruitless of result, not only for his character, but almost for his intellect.\* In proportion as the range of his knowledge was wide, were his head and heart narrow. The silliest old woman's tales are so believable to this learned historical inquirer, that he enters them in his annals. A pedant in science, he is pettily vain about his reputation for learning and his University influence; and to preserve this when it seems to him endangered, he does not at all hesitate even at intrigue. As he had wrung out all that

\* Frischlin accused Crusius of deriving the German word 'Dolch' (a short dagger or poniard) from *δοιχόσκιον ἔγχος* (a long spear), per antiphrasin; which Strauss thinks is a mischievous joke. There are modern German professors, however, quite as ingenious. Döderlein, as we used to learn from Mr. T. K. Arnold, derives 'trucidare,' to murder or butcher, from 'taurum cædere,' to cut down an ox.

he knew by dead labour from faculties any thing but fertile, he cherished a considerable reverence for his own person ; and at times, if he were too near touched, he could break out into a sort of fanaticism as at a desecration of what was holy.—Frischlin was strong in person and full in blood, of sanguine complexion, with a portly impressive figure and free bearing, full of laughter and jest. He spoke so loud in the streets as to excite notice where he was not well known. He was of intensely sanguine temperament, open, but also boastful ; quickly irascible, and quickly appeased ; at one time easily touched, at another obstinate ; unsparing in wit,\* and yet not without good nature. Crusius, on the other hand, had a sallow face, serious mien, stiff carriage, measured pace, unctuous speech ; he was not averse to ornament in dress ; of atrabilious temperament ; not boastful, but so much the more vain ; not easily irritated, but rancorous and unforgiving. Between men such as these there was no preventing a quarrel unless Frischlin was much on his guard. But to be on his guard at all, he was not the man."

Our readers would not thank us for following the episodes, retardations, and accelerations, of this dullest of human "epic" contests. Crusius kept a diary exclusively sacred to it, and noted up all Frischlin's misdemeanours, all his hair-brained boasts and threats, all his own replies, all Frischlin's slips and misfortunes, all the circumstances of his death and burial and posthumous literary resurrection, with accurate dates in Latin oddly besprinkled with Greek—the German professor's idea of a life-duel ! Our author—with that astounding national diligence in things useless, which makes us often imagine that if the Germans had only laid the foundation-stone of Babel, it would be their honourable pride to build patiently at it still—has anxiously perused the infinitely boastful and foolish volubility of his hero, and the spite of his opponents, together with all the extant advice of his advisers ; and has usually quoted or condensed something at least concerning every passage-at-arms in this tedious tournament for his readers ; and all which he has written a morbid conscience has obliged us to read. We will give the result. Frischlin had never a regular professor's chair ; he was only an extraordinary professor. It was his great desire to belong to the Faculty. Unluckily he was not only imprudent enough to irritate his colleague, but he also furnished him with weapons against himself. He was not particularly pious ; he got into drunken quarrels ; he was not

\* Very moderately formidable wit,—a little heavy perhaps, though it is possible to smile at his *humour* sometimes. There is a mystic faith-drama by Frischlin, such as the Catholics commonly invented to amuse the people, in the course of which he puts a really humorous protest into the mouth of the Virgin against the miracles attributed to her by the monks :

"Zween Bischof soll ich haben kusst:  
O Herr, das ist mir unbewusst," &c.

entirely faithful to his wife. Under these circumstances, with a powerful enemy in the University, he could not have kept his place at all, probably—though he was a very popular teacher—but for the marked favour of the Duke. The Duke of Wirtemberg drank also, and found Frischlin one of his pleasantest companions. He also liked to have Latin elegies and odes addressed to him on anniversaries, which Frischlin could manufacture better than any man of his day. But Frischlin blundered into an attack on the nobility. He wrote a eulogy on the agricultural life (*de vitâ rusticâ*), and launched out into rhetorical abuse of the degenerate nobles of the time. He does not appear to have meant much by it. It was a theme for “eloquence;” and in he went, calling them as a class, with frugal exceptions, “Cyclops,” “Centaur,” “men-eaters,” through a good deal of watery invective. However, he had had personal quarrels with men of this class before the publication of the Latin oration, and these took care to have a German version (and not a fair one, for it still further abridged the exceptions) immediately prepared and distributed. The Latin version would have been far beyond the reading powers of most of the German nobility, who were but a raw set. But now the nobility rose against him, and his life was scarcely safe. Not only the Wirtemberg nobility, but that of Franconia and the Rhine, violently memorialised the Duke of Wirtemberg to punish his professor. The Duke acted a manly part enough: rejected their memorials, and only insisted that Frischlin should publish an explanatory apologetic paper. Frischlin was, like himself, at one time frightened into almost abject apology; at another bursting out into fresh causes of offence. When the screw was on—he had been ordered to confine himself to his house—he was all concession; when off, he effervesced again, and broke every promise he had made. He taunted the University, hit at the nobles, wrote epigrams on Crusius. Thus he tired out the Duke; and when the University again refused to raise him to a professor’s chair, he asked and obtained permission to accept a post, offered him in Styria as rector of a gymnasium. Here were spent probably the most useful two years of his life. He applied himself to grammatical studies, gained his enthusiasm for J. C. Scaliger, and wrote two works which really did much to simplify the absurd grammatical prolixities of the day, and to advance the comparative study of Latin and Greek grammar. Unfortunately, even here he could not refrain from attacking his old enemy, who had also written a grammar, and a poor one. After a stay of two years, Frischlin’s wife, it is said, insisted on his returning to their own land; and back they came, without



prospects. The goodnatured Duke of Wirtemberg took him again into favour, employed him on Court-poems, and again did his best to induce the University to appoint him their professor. It was now that Crusius—more than ever spiteful, owing to the grammatical attacks—brought to light, from seven years back, Frischlin's infidelity to his wife, which, in the Court of Wirtemberg, at that time was a grave criminal offence. To this was added a perpetual disposition to break out into libels on the University, and efforts to renew the struggle with the nobles by appeal to the Austrian emperor. The Duke mildly gave him the choice between a public prosecution and its consequences, and banishment accompanied by a solemn oath never again to write against the University nor the Wirtemberg government nor his personal enemy Crusius, and never to desert the Lutheran faith. Frischlin chose banishment, took the oath, and very speedily broke it. With almost every Easter and Michaelmas, publications of Frischlin's came into Wirtemberg from the fairs, in which his old enemy and enemies were held up to ridicule. He got a precarious livelihood—now by dedicating a Latin poem to some conspicuous man or corporation, now by lecturing on rhetoric, now by conducting a school.

Restlessly driven about by insatiable ideas of his own greatness, he abandoned every thing that promised a sober maintenance, and inundated the world with writings in which philology, vanity, and irritation fermented together in odd mixture. At last, when the government of Wirtemberg had written plainly, "We will be no more troubled by your affairs; only if you *will* break your oath, keep out of our way, or you may find that princes have long arms,"—he returned an answer so insolent, that it was determined to arrest him. Frischlin was then at Mainz. In spite of an appeal to the Emperor of Germany, he was given up by the Elector of Mainz to the Duke of Wirtemberg's emissary, and was thrown into prison. At first he was mildly treated; being detected, however, in the attempt to send letters of complaint and accusation against his own government to the emperor and other imperial officials, he was removed to a place of greater safety and severely treated. From the bleak tower of Hohenurach, in the Schwabian Jura, poor Frischlin poured forth, with unwearying pen, Mississippi floods of "copy" on a mostly ungrateful world. For the first two months of his imprisonment his sufferings were very great. Without change of linen, with insufficient light and food, and no exercise, he was overpowered by all the miseries of filth and complete nervous depression; yet still he wrote on. He had declined to take his trial for the old offences, or let the law

run its course, thinking it more prudent to throw himself on the *mercy* of the officials. To some of the ministers, however, he had given personal offence that rankled in their minds; and in these latter days the good-natured Duke Ludwig, with energy and health impaired by drinking, left things very much to the disposal of his cabinet. Frischlin as usual bent like a reed; but the ministers were satisfied with no slight humiliation. By long Latin petitions, and distiches in praise of every influential person, he strove to win his release. He applied for pardon to every one,—to the University of Tübingen, to Crusius himself, and to each member of the cabinet,—in separate communications. There is something pathetic in this immediate and absolute conquest of physical misery over him. The Duke's counsellors, who, so few weeks before, had been inveighed against in no measured terms, were now, "every one of them, without exception, glorious men, respected by the whole world." But these numerous petitions and private letters were but a small part of his activity. In four months of prison-life he produced, besides all these memorials, two biblical dramas, and a Latin epic of twelve books, containing 12,500 hexameter lines on the rise of the Hebrew monarchy. It was called the *Hebrais*; the materials were taken from the books of Kings; and he predicted it would "last as long as the heavens and earth remain." There is a sublimity in such productiveness apart from the quality of the product. It suggests the wish that one could as easily turn to external advantage such flow of spoiled intellect as we can streams of spoiled water. Muddy streams that we cannot drink will still turn a mill. Is there no hope of economising, in these literary days, the floods of hapless muddy intellect, discovered to be unfit for consumption? However, the *Hebrais*, though much admired, turned no stone for poor Frischlin,—at least not in the time his impatient nature allowed him to wait for it. After seven months' imprisonment, of which the last five were comparatively light, he made a desperate effort to escape. It was the end of November, and the weather cold. The stove by which his room was heated was carried through the wall of the castle and heated from outside, and the aperture closed by a little iron-barred gate. Frischlin broke into his stove, and escaped through this narrow opening to the wall. He had cut up his bed-linen to make a rope for his descent; and with a bright moon his chance of escape was not small. He attempted, however, the wrong side of the castle, where the precipices were steepest: and his rope was either too slight or too short. On the next morning, November 30, 1790, he was found lying dead halfway between the fortress and the foot of the rocks. The rest-

less and turbid-minded scholar had broken out of his language-prison into real life at last. Crusius noted the various accounts given of the event with circumstantial accuracy in his Anti-Frischlin diary, and prayed "the most merciful heavenly Father to have pity on his soul."

Dr. Strauss's view of Frischlin's career is contained in the remark, that a man's course depends much on the downward or upward course of the development of the time; and that if the last living historical "Idea," as in Frischlin's case, have spent itself, and not yet reappeared in a new form, he has nothing to *serve* but himself. To us, however, it seems certain that, to explain the ebb and flow of human worship as an intermittent fever of historical "ideas," is one of the most miserable of philosophical suggestions; and there seems no more startling testimony to the living relation of God to man than the lassitude which succeeds a period of new faith in a generation that is disposed to live on the *light* of faith rather than on the faith itself. Frischlin and many of his contemporaries spent their lives (like an enlightened nineteenth century) in glorifying themselves on their new knowledge-conquests; and the restless fever which consumed him and them simply marked, *not* that the power of the Reformation was spent, but that the new intellectual wealth it had floated down was as little fitted as the old middle-age metaphysics to satisfy the spirit of man. By stimulating the understanding, it made the inward need only keener. It was exactly by becoming an "Idea," not by ceasing to be one, that the Reformation dried up and withered.

We have left ourselves little space to speak of Strauss's life of the poet Schubart,—a far more interesting and even characteristic book than the more recent one we have just noticed. Schubart also was a Schwabian poet, and, like Frischlin, an unfortunate one. About two centuries after Frischlin's imprisonment in Hohenurach, another Duke of Wirtemberg,—the same Herzog Karl whose paternal despotism would have kept Schiller in his service as a young army-surgeon but for the poet's flight,—entrapped Schubart back into his dominions, and sent him without cause assigned to the fortress of Hohenasperg, where for ten years he lingered in prison, and was then, as arbitrarily, set free and received into high court-favour. Schubart wrote his own life; and Strauss's biography is not a regular narrative, but a collection of Schubart's hitherto unpublished letters,—some of them of the deepest interest,—accompanied by a short commentary of moral and philosophical criticism on his hero's career. It is rather an illustration and application of Strauss's own theory of life, and not for its

even higher interest as supplying new elements for a picture of the poet, that we wish to say a few concluding words upon it.

Schubart was a man of real genius, and of intensely German genius; every thing he said and did was homespun and national, and was moreover *in the grain* rather than a result of culture. It is curious that no one of our great English poets could well be conceived to have written at all as they have written, without culture. Culture is of the essence of the poetic insight in almost all, if not all, of them. England has no Burns. In Germany, on the other hand, the character of the genius that speaks through culture is less marked and less rich than that which is so completely inborn as scarcely to take even the impress of culture. Schiller is essentially a poet of culture. But the deepest vein of Goethe's poetry would have come out, we believe, pretty much as it did, without culture,—paradoxical as it may seem to say this of that extremely *high-farmed* genius. This is perhaps only another way of saying that labour is of the very essence even of the English *genius*, while spontaneousness is of the essence of the German. However this may be, the intensely representative nationality of Schubart's whole character renders its estimate by Germans one of some importance. In estimating its defects, and its highest treatment, they are judging their own people. We think Dr. Strauss felt this throughout the careful essays in which he criticises Schubart's life. Schubart's face has been likened to Danton's; its expression is something between that and Luther's, without, however, having the resolution of either. It is affectionate, but sensual; without fibre, but with great simplicity, much transient passion, and that air of easy equal familiarity with all things,—God, or man, or woman,—which strikes one in the portrait of young Goethe, and, indeed, colours the popular religion of Germany from Luther's writings down to the childish legends in Grimm. *Der liebe Gott*, as German religion always loves to call the Divine Father, exactly expresses the easy spontaneous familiarity which looks out on the world in the genuine German genius. Many of Luther's heartiest sayings would be held profanity itself in England. Schubart's life was cast during the period of that unhealthy but fertile time for German literature, when Goethe's genius first rose,—that self-conscious physico-sentimental adolescence of Europe, or at least of France, Germany, and, to a less extent, of England. It was of rather an earlier time that Schubart spoke when he personified the spirit of the age as a "great witling with a thoroughly corrupt heart;" but even that worse age had not passed away in his youth. His genius for society, his wonderful improvising power both in poetry and music, led him into terrible

temptations, to which he succumbed,—but with feverish, miserable, undeceived heart. During a course of dissipation, when he was engaged as organist at the court of Wirtemberg, his wife left him, and took refuge in her father's care; and Schubart, never dead to religion, and really attached to his family, and still retaining a deep sense of his estrangement from God, wrote down the state of his mind in a paper remarkable for its deep pathos and clear self-sincerity. At this time, however, he had not the resolution to mend, and consequently grew worse. Very nearly did he profess himself a convert to Roman Catholicism, for the mere hope of a professional engagement. From this he was saved partly by his own repugnance, more by the fortunate exposure of his past life. From this period his external life at least took a turn for the better. His wife returned to him; he started a newspaper—the *Deutsche Chronik*, the first popular German newspaper of any literary ability—in Augsburg, soon removing it to Ulm, which had immense success. Though still very dissipated, his ties to his family, or at least to his *children*, not to his wife, grew in strength. His letters at this period, however, are far more selfish, and show, we think, far less self-discontent than in the earlier and madder time. It is remarkable, that throughout his period of declension he had a deep foreboding of disaster,—as men always have who feel inward claims upon them which they resist. Suddenly the blow, which he had for eight years been expecting, fell. He had avoided the dominions of the Duke of Wirtemberg. He used to say a foreboding always seized him when he saw Herzog Karl,—he thought of the “thunderbolts in the hand of Jupiter.” Yet he had never been threatened by the Duke. When he had offended, and might have been legally imprisoned, he was merely dismissed. Now, in Ulm, he was out of the Duke's territory. Suddenly, however, the Duke, either offended by his newspaper, or from some other secret motive, determined to capture him. He enticed him into the Wirtemberg dominions by sheer fraud, and then arrested and shut him up for ten years in prison.

During this time Schubart's life took a deeply religious colouring, which Strauss regards as pure deterioration. He prefers the coarse and sensual and generally very selfish tone of the letters from Ulm to the purer affection and passionate religious remorse which pours from him in prison, because something of religious superstition and apocalyptic tastes may be found with it. Nay, he even seems to prefer it to the calmer spirit and affectionate devotion of the letters which follow Schubart's release. He entered his prison a sensual and selfish man. After his freedom, he fell again into the

*bon-vivant* habits which he had been so long denied; but to his wife and children he was an utterly changed man—faithful, tender, considerate. He probably saw little harm in the luxurious indolence to which his physical temperament predisposed him, as his genius enabled him to earn the means for it with very slender application. Yet Strauss speaks strongly of the utter failure of religious influence to change him; and while admitting a real change, argues that it *would* have come on without the religion. In the letters immediately before his imprisonment, Schubart uniformly speaks of his wife with contempt, and almost derision,—far less affectionately than in previous days of the wildest dissipation. His conduct to her was the subject of his first deep remorse in prison; it totally changed with his deeper faith. Yet this is Strauss's treatment of it:

“In the full measure of her great worth he was now able to estimate his much-tried wife; and a fine spiritual bond united him with both his children, whose life-long enthusiastic attachment to their father,—an attachment which was afterwards expressed by the son in his excellent book on Schubart's character,—again gave striking testimony what a good, love-giving and love-exciting father Schubart was. In the latter part of his imprisonment he had aptly said of himself, ‘The devil can make no use of me, and God does not give up his hold on me.’ This God, however, who held him, was not that seven-eyed Spirit of the Universe whom the beasts praise by the side of the crystal sea, as Schubart, in apocalyptic fashion, would call it up before his fancy; but it was in a quite simply human sense the God of the hearth and family. The blood that redeemed him from the pit of destruction was not the sacrificial blood of an imaginary God-man, but his own, which he found again in the excellent natures of his children, whose non-sensual and yet natural love ennobled his whole being. This ennobling effect of domestic life had, however, as we have seen, begun to operate in Ulm before his imprisonment; it *would gradually* have strengthened, and *would scarcely* have been disturbed more by the excesses which Schubart would certainly have committed, than it was disturbed by the violent revolution which his imprisonment caused in his inward nature and all his relations.”

Thus Strauss simply refuses to admit that an access of religious life can have had any effect in producing a change, which, as a change, he cannot deny. In truth, nothing can be more mad than the belief that Germany will ever outlive her religious, unless she also outlive her moral, strength. It is the marked temperament of the people to learn duty through love, not to learn love through duty. Their real root of stedfastness is in the possibility of a hearty religious love. Schubart and Frischlin alike show a strange want of stedfastness of mind. Both bend before the first misery; both of them yield to the first push

of real power. Schubart does not even *resent* injustice. He utterly forgets ten years of injustice as soon as it is past. This light and yet impulsive temperament may attain the self-mastery Strauss preaches, but it will be through love of a *personal* Righteousness. Make right into a mere idea—a philosophy—and you lose the only lever by which it can take homogeneous hold of a German mind. A German is not a Greek; and yet Dr. Strauss will talk as if he were. The idea of the following passage seems to us the most credulous of the dreams of incredulity:

“Man and poet were perfectly identical in Schubart; yet unfortunately both the man and the poet broke into two pieces. ‘Spiritual’ and ‘secular’ are the two divisions of his poems, but also of his essence and activity in life. Too weak to struggle with his sensual nature, the spiritual in him kept apart,—abode in the empty space of the unsubstantial ideal, and of unsupported enthusiasm,—sunned itself in the ether, while the animal in him rolled in the mud. The double tendency in the German literature of that time had the most destructive influence in exaggerating this double economy of his life. Klopstock and Wieland, with their schools, stood face to face in hostile array, like the Seraph and the Faun. But as a confutation in *fact* of this *theoretic* onesidedness, not only did Wieland pay respect in life to the morality which he satirised in fiction, but also on the side of Klopstock there was a reaction visible in many of the members of the poetic league, as also in Goethe’s youth—the world of sense revolting against the stiff spiritualism of the day; and in the Sturm-und-Drang school that solution of the problem was given which for a long time was in repute at the court of the Muses in Weimar, namely, to rob the sensual nature of its dangerous tendency by letting it have its swing undisturbed, in the meanwhile using it as a medium for introducing artistic materials into the mind. This had been Schubart’s practice for some time before the proper Sturm-und-Drang period; a practice which we see carried out both before his imprisonment and after his liberation. On the Asperg, Christianity was tried on him as a cure; but, as we have seen, without permanent result. The schism between sense and spirit, the divergence of the two parts of the nature, it could not and cannot heal, because it does not touch its root. It might by rights *exterminate* Sense; but as it cannot do this, it shuts one eye, and secretly authorises it, so long as it only keeps within certain limits. But this is all; of due recognition of Sense, or any real modification of the idea of life to include it, there is no mention. The Christian is, at the best, an angel riding on a tamed animal—no homogeneous man. On that very account the danger always remains that the curbed animal will take occasion to emancipate itself, as we see was the case with Schubart on his liberation, and, indeed, immediately upon the lightening of his chains. Not to suppress, but, by culture, to humanise the natural groundwork of humanity,—this the Greeks alone understood. It was in the reawaken-

ing of their writings and their spirit that the idea of this true human existence first rose upon Christian nations. Nourished into greatness upon these writings, our own two great classical poets have represented, both in life and in poetry,—and also in its two principal manifestations of a gradual growth and a hardly-won victory,—this penetration of nature by spirit—of the Sensuous by the Moral. In Goethe and Schiller, as poets and as men, that was accomplished which Schubart wanted, when, without even having discovered the way, he ended his fateful wanderings.”

There is no more extraordinary statement than this, that Greece had solved the problem how to unite the spiritual and bodily life in one homogeneous harmony. The only truth in it is the mixture of beauty with which their material civilisation was penetrated. No Western nation ever infused *less* of spiritual and moral force into its outward life. Plato's dialogues are one continued wail that the physical life in Greece has enslaved the mind. And they describe a state of society which proves that this assertion was not the passionate delusion of an impatient moralist. The difficulty of attaining a homogeneous human life, of which Dr. Strauss speaks so much, is simply the difficulty of making the life of the body assist and strengthen that of the spirit, and the life of the spirit develop that of the body. Where is there this *fusing* power in the “service of the Idea,” which, if it be any thing at all, would seem to be only abstract? It is admitted that a fusing power is *needed*; that, in *fact*, the mental and physical powers are divergent. Where, then, should this fusing power be, except in the worship of Another in whom there is no such conflict—whose life is the Life of the universe, and also the spirit of Righteousness and Love?

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## ART. IX.—THE SLAVE EMPIRE OF THE WEST.

*America Free, or America Slave: an Address on the State of the Country, delivered by John Jay, Esq., at Bedford, Westchester County, New York, October 8th, 1856.*

*A History of the Struggle for Slavery Extension or Restriction in the United States from the Declaration of Independence to the Present Day.* By Horace Greeley. New York, 1856.

*A History of the American Compromises.* By Harriet Martineau. London: John Chapman, 1856.

*American Slavery: a Reprint of an Article on "Uncle Tom's Cabin," of which a portion was inserted in the 206th Number of the Edinburgh Review, and of Mr. Sumner's Speech of the 19th and 20th May 1856.* London: Longman and Co., 1856.

*Kansas, the Seat of War in America.* By Richard Bowlby. London: Effingham Wilson, 1856.

*Dred: a Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp.* By Harriet Beecher Stowe. London: Sampson Low, Son, and Co., 1856.

IF to be moved by the same events and eager about the same issues be a natural evidence of sympathy and friendship, never was an instinctive congeniality more intensely marked than between England and America during the past autumn. The elections in the United States have been watched with an interest rarely felt in the domestic concerns of a distant country: and the steamer that brought Mr. Buchanan's numbers was held to be charged with a more momentous message than the telegraph which declared the vote for the "Elected of December." Nor had our own British affairs any thing to do with this excitement. It was a genuine self-identification with a struggle every-way great,—great in its principle, great in its scale, great in its consequences: and every thing was forgot except indignation at the lawless wrongs which preceded and embittered it, and admiration of the men by whom they had been worthily denounced. No doubt our English sympathies have been all on one side, and *that* the defeated one: but for no other reason than prevails with patriots of Massachusetts or New York; because resistance to the Southern policy appears essential to the true glory of the Republic and the best hopes of the world. If we are disappointed and disquieted at the issue of the contest, it is because we could desire better guarantees for the peace, the freedom, the permanently high example, of an empire nearest in kindred and youngest in promise.

The suspense, with all its party exaggerations, is now at an end. The Legislature of the United States is settled for two years, the Executive for four. The men are already named, who are to impress a direction on one of the critical periods of human history: and during the lull which intervenes between their appointment and their action, while their purposes are taking silent shape in their minds, the hour is favourable for an estimate of their position and probable policy.

Not for the first time,—perhaps for the last,—the terrible problem of Slavery, long the secret haunt, has become the open battle-field of American politics. In the recent strife of parties, this topic furnished the sole issue to be tried. In place of the delicate silence, usually enforced by the code of democratic politeness, towards the “peculiar institution,” the journals, the halls, the “stumps,” have exhausted the resources of political eloquence in its attack and defence. This public discussion even in Congress, of a subject long sealed-up under official and popular prohibition, is regarded by many simple-minded persons as a cheering sign that “the question is making way.” They remember the time when a profound unconsciousness of this evil seemed to possess the country,—when you might read through the whole literature of the Union (advertisements excepted) without suspecting the existence of a slave,—or when the right of petition and the liberty of debate were refused at Washington to the hopes and conscience of the North. Comparing this unhealthy suppression with the free speech of the past summer, they celebrate the dawn and anticipate the victory, of the daylight now let in. Alas! they forget that the silent and suspended interval of every strife is simply the hour of watchful equipoise, while each combatant can barely hold his own: and that when the shout is first raised, it only means that one of the foes feels himself strong enough to rush upon the other, and tells not whether the advance be from the evil or the good. In the present instance, what is it that has broken the ominous silence? Is it that the reforming spirit has recovered its feet and renewed the fight? Is it not rather that the oppressor’s fear is gone, and he exchanges his dumb feint for loud audacity? For awhile the South was content with stopping the mouth of the New-England States: but now she prefers to speak out for herself, and cane the bare head of Senatorial reply. The debate in Congress has arisen, not in concession to Northern rights, but in the service of Southern treachery and aggression,—to legalise a breach of public faith and force the stipulated limits of slavery. It only proves, we fear, that shame has been cast aside; and that the time is past when mere words on the floor of the House are terrible.

The Englishman, having once upon a time paid twenty millions to redeem his negroes, and being moreover a decent Christian, never doubts that slavery is a doomed institution, and habitually speaks as if it were nearly worn out. He resents it as a reflection both on the efficacy of his own good example and on the Providence of the world, if you hint that this iniquity may yet have its lease renewed. All his strongest feelings and most fixed ideas render him inaccessible to such an apprehension: his instincts of justice, his political economy, his respect for Brother Jonathan who thrashed him and set up for himself, his admiration of Washington and the great Republic, his trust in the veracity of their declaration "All men are born free and equal,"—combine to assure him, that, somehow or other, emancipation cannot be far off. The faith in Right which this opinion involves,—the slowness to believe in any triumph of Wrong,—we honour in the highest degree; and we accept with intense conviction their predictions as to the *ultimate* issues of human things. But "the end is not yet;" nor are "the times and the seasons" to be ascertained by the justest light of faith and sentiment. The *proximate* Future is determined by the recent Past: and if historical prevision is attainable at all, it can only be by carefully laying down the lines of tendency that run through the present century and tracing whither they converge. There is an abusive reliance on Eternal Rectitude which makes good men blind to the real forces of human wickedness and incredulous of the possible vitality of wrong. They talk about "trust in a principle." But the best "principle" in the world is not *alive*; and will effect just nothing at all, if let alone, or merely blazoned forth in speech and print. Not till it gets hold of living men and works itself out at their finger-ends, not till it passes from abstract to concrete, from moral to material, is the smallest hope to be entertained of it. We know not which is most to be deplored, in this matter of American Slavery;—the conservative quietude which is content to invoke the influence of "truth and time;"—or the abolitionist repudiation of "political action." Busy falsehood will do more, we fear, in the briefest "time," than idle "truth" in an eternity. And in dealing with an evil subsisting by artifice of law, strengthened by constitutional compact, and penetrating the entire policy of the State, to renounce "political action" seems very like objecting to "medical action" in a case of poisoning, or "typographical action" in confutation of a book. The plea that every resort to the ballot-box implies allegiance to a constitution which recognises slavery, is so puerile, that we presume there is some other than this ostensible ground,—some local difficulty—some unexpressed antipathy,—at the base of this extra-

ordinary resolve. We rejoice to observe that the present crisis has emancipated some of the noblest of a noble band from a scruple so disabling. For the personal devotedness and heroism of many Abolitionists, and for the genius and accomplishments of some, we avow the highest admiration: and in the stern work of awakening the public conscience and baffling every hope of a hush-up, they have done good service. But the problem which they start they do not help to solve. To the foreigner their public organs are repulsive from their violence. To the statesman their programme of "*immediate* emancipation" is absurd to begin with, and becomes mere trifling at the end of twenty years. To the moralist, their refusal to mediate between the inherited evil and the desired escape,—their short-cut through all sympathy with the slaveholders' difficulty,—must appear a virtual confession of incapacity to deal with the elements of a vast and complicated question. We are far from admitting the assertion that they have retarded the solution of the great problem: but their function as a party is to supply rather incentives to the conflict than wisdom to achieve the victory.

To judge of the prospects of American Slavery, it is necessary to watch the changes it has undergone, in area, in population, in strength of economical interest, in hold on political party and social opinion, during the last seventy years.

During the war of Independence, there was no State whose soil was without its bondsmen. But that struggle awakened sentiments which put slavery to the blush: and as early as 1783, the phrase in the Massachusetts Bill of Rights, "All men are born free and equal," was declared, in the Supreme Court at Boston, to bar slave-holding in that State. The judges of New Hampshire attributed to the same words the effect of securing freedom to every child subsequently born. The example spread immediately to Connecticut and Rhode Island. Before 1790, the further introduction of slaves had been prohibited in five other States, including Virginia and Maryland, and provision had been made in Pennsylvania and New York and New Jersey for the exemption from bondage of all future-born persons. Every where, except in South Carolina and Georgia, the *tendency* declared itself against Slavery: but nowhere was the "institution" entirely absent. In this early and mixed state of things, the social colouring was much more homogeneous than we are apt to imagine: and a later season was required to bring out the distinctive shades. Throwing back, however, into the servile territory the States which, like Virginia, did not follow up their good beginnings, and claiming as free soil only those that consummated their emancipative acts, we find that a survey of the Union in its first years would yield the following

result. Of the whole area of the country, 403,000 square miles were free soil, and 385,000 slave soil. At present, the slave area contains 929,000 square miles; the free, 643,000. The slave-holders' portion has thus increased from less than 49 per cent to more than 59 per cent of the whole.

The *number of slaves* at the two ends of the same period affords another point of comparison. It will yield, however, no just inference, unless we bear in mind two important facts: (1) that by the measures taken in the Northern States, 120,000 negroes were emancipated in the first twenty years, and thus withdrawn, with their increase, from the slave-census; and (2) that since the cessation in 1808 of the external slave-trade the servile class has been restricted to natural increase, while the white population has received immense accessions from immigration. Of the magnitude of this element some idea may be formed from the return, in the tables of 1850, of nearly two millions and a half of foreign-born persons living in the States. These are most powerful causes, thinning and excluding the one class, attracting the other, for the last half-century. The small impression they have jointly produced on the relative numbers of slaves and whites\* is truly remarkable. The former amounted in 1790 to 697,900 out of 3,870,400, or 18 per cent. In 1850, they numbered 3,204,300 out of 22,757,400, or above 14 per cent: and were the foreign-born actual immigrants then living thrown out of the account, the percentage would rise to 15.6. Thus the relative magnitude of the evil is but little changed since the time when the Confederation was fresh and strong in common sentiment and distinctly tending to a common policy on this very matter. So little is this now the case, that for the purposes of this question the States divide themselves into two camps: and the difficulty arising from the increased number of slaves in the South is scarcely alleviated by the preponderance of the other race in the North. The absolute danger and embarrassment of the problem, no one can doubt, have incalculably increased, and are yearly increasing, with the growing mass of servitude. Were it the immediate interest, and the unanimous will of the proprietors to have only free labour on their estates next year, it would be a much more anxious thing to effect the change than at any date during the last sixty years.

But unfortunately, vast *economical interests* have grown up, which since the last century have given to the system a tena-

\* We neglect in this calculation the free coloured people: the census of 1790 not enumerating them; their later numbers consisting of people directly transferred from the one status to the other, and so vitiating the comparison; and the whole class being too small materially to affect the result (about 430,000 in 1850).

city altogether new. At the time of the Union, Georgia and South Carolina were the only States yielding tropical products, and demanding African labour. Rice and cotton, raised on low-lying lands under a temperature ranging from 80° upwards, require for their culture a latitude not higher than the limit between the Carolinas, and a human constitution more patient of heat than the Anglo-Saxon. Had these States, with their present limits, been cut off by sea or desert from the South and West, their power to retard the incipient tendency to emancipation would have been only temporary. For awhile, no doubt, the stimulus imparted to cotton-cultivation by the invention of the saw-gin, would still have operated to enhance the value and tighten the chains of the slave. But as soon as the plantations had obtained their complement of hands, the question would have returned, whether the work might not be got out of the negroes as free labourers: and it is conceivable that, in the face of an overwhelming preponderance of social sentiment against slavery, and under conditions thus brought into analogy to those of our West Indian islands, the experiment might have long preceded ours. But the gigantic expansion of the annual cotton export from zero (for up to 1790 not a bag had yet been shipped) to twelve hundred millions of pounds could not expend itself in crowding the fields of the old Atlantic coast. Around the Gulf of Mexico were adjacent lands, practically unlimited, eminently favourable to tropical products, and politically within easy reach of the Republic's ambition. In 1803, the acquisition of Louisiana more than doubled the whole Union at a stroke, and furnished lands on which the sugar-cane would grow. Florida, annexed in 1821, and Texas in 1845, opened new fields of the richest promise. The inevitable dispersion of labour drawn off to till the fresh territories, reproduced all the conditions which give strength to slavery. A sparse population, under a burning heaven and on fertile plains inviting occupation, will toil for others only under compulsion: and where combination of labour is needed to reclaim the wilderness and raise the crop, the importation of slaves will be profitable. Hence a sudden enhancement of the market-value of a gang: and the rapid development of an internal slave-trade, transporting the surplus hands from the middle States to the unbroken fields of the South. The operation of this cause in reanimating the slave-power where it was nearly spent, and in converting Virginia especially from an agricultural into a "breeding" state, is familiar to every reader of Mrs. Stowe; and speaks to the eye in the statistics of the last twenty or thirty years. While the number of slaves has been comparatively stationary in the old States in which they are "raised," it has doubled, trebled,

quadrupled, in the Southern countries added to the Union. Between 1830, for instance, and 1850, the slaves in Virginia have increased only from 469,757 to 472,528 : but in the same time the number in Florida has risen from 15,501 to 39,309, and Texas has acquired 58,161. In 1820 North Carolina had 295,017 slaves : in 1850, the number had been *reduced* to 288,548 : and in the same interval, Maryland had suffered a similar decrease from 107,398 to 90,368 : but meanwhile the increase in Alabama had been from 41,879 to 342,892 ; in Mississippi, from 32,814 to 309,878 ; in Louisiana, from 69,064 to 244,809 ; in Arkansas, from 1,617 to 47,000 ; in Tennessee, from 80,107 to 239,460 ; and even in Missouri, from 10,222 to 87,422. From a glance at these figures it becomes obvious that a new commerce has sprung up, unhappily restoring a common interest in the "domestic institution" to States, whose unequal agricultural competition was beginning to draw them in different directions. It is as idle to judge of Virginia's prosperity by her field-produce, as to condemn pastures for not yielding corn. She is the grazing-farm for rearing human stock : and so long as her land supplies yearly exports equal in value to the whole exports of the Union to Canada or Cuba, she will hold to the gainful though it be a guilty traffic. The excess of land in one place, and the excess of labour suitable to till it in another, have found each other out ; and have created a joint economical interest, too powerful to be reached by moral appeal. Mr. Calhoun no doubt expresses the universal sentiment of the Southern States, when in a despatch of August 12th, 1844, he speaks thus of the effects which would follow the abolition of Slavery :

"To this continent, the blow would be calamitous beyond description. It would destroy, in a great measure, the cultivation and production of the great tropical staples, amounting annually in value to nearly three hundred millions of dollars,—the fund which stimulates and upholds almost every other branch of its industry, commerce, navigation, and manufactures. The whole, by their joint influence, are rapidly spreading population, wealth, improvement and civilisation over the whole continent, and vivifying, by their overflow, the industry of Europe, thereby increasing its population, wealth, and advancement in the arts, in power, and in civilisation." *Greeley's History*, p. 40.

In order to confirm his estimate of slave-economy, Mr. Calhoun dwells complacently in this remarkable despatch on the reputed failure of the British experiment of emancipation : and in demonstrating our failure, unless Mr. Greeley's *History* reproduces the paper incorrectly, he understates the sugar-produce of our colonies about 120-fold,—confounding perhaps *hundred-weights* and *pounds*. "The British possessions," he says, "including the East and West Indies, and Mauritius, pro-

duced in 1842, of sugar only, 3,993,771 pounds." Now the official returns for that year show the total amount from these sources entered in that year for home consumption, to have been 4,325,785 cwt. Great as have been and are the difficulties attending the change in our West Indian policy, they have not yet driven us to the mean and wicked course attributed to us by this statesman;—viz. the resolve to ruin our competitors on the American continent by forcing on them the slave-emancipation under which we are smarting ourselves. In truth, the sacrifices entailed by the transition to free labour and free commerce have occasioned us no surprise and certainly no repentance: and their limit has evidently been reached. The impression, we believe, prevails among the American planters that the British West Indies are rapidly returning to a state of nature; and especially are fast abandoning the sugar-cane as too much for the energies of free labour. Happily, the commercial returns dispel this ridiculous illusion. Slavery was abolished by the Act of 1833; the system of forced labour being still continued for some years under the name of Apprenticeship, and the monopoly by differential duties remaining unbroken till 1845. If we take the produce of the three years, 1835, 1845, 1855, we shall see at a glance the latest achievements of the slave-system, with protective duties; the result of free labour without free trade; and the most recent operation of a system doubly free. In the first of the three selected years, our slave-colonies (West Indies and Mauritius) furnished, for home-consumption only, 178,000 tons of sugar and molasses; in the second, 180,626; in the third, 211,631. Thus the free produce, instead of dwindling away in obedience to prediction, has increased about 19 per cent. Still, while defending the results of the great British experiment from misapprehension, we are far from denying that the curse of slavery has been redeemed by vast effort and sacrifice. Nor could it be removed from the adjacent continent without still greater and more protracted loss, during the transition to a better system. Under slavery alone do men exist for the mere soil's sake. With freedom, Nature re-asserts her right, and the soil is found to exist for the sake of men: and as in Jamaica, so in America, the labourer, left at his own disposal, will be content with the kind and degree of work which suffices to supply his customary wants. It is not reasonable to expect from the African, trained in the worship of idleness, a spontaneous and superfluous industry. The energy which only the competition of numbers extorts from a white peasantry will reserve itself for the same stimulus among the coloured races. It is a waste of time to discuss the relative *cheapness or dearness* of free labour under



conditions which tempt it to retire from market altogether. Such conditions, we fear, are present over a large area in the Southern States; and constrain us to admit a powerful, though not permanent, economic interest in favour of the existing system.

A strong moral sentiment, however, or a decided political instinct, will find a way through all problems of gain or loss. And if we could see, in reviewing the past seventy years, a growing force of anti-slavery opinion in the Union, we should give little heed to the argument from the balance-sheet. But it is a startling fact that, while there have been repeated Federal contests, at considerable intervals, between the slave principle and the free, the victory has remained, more and more decisively, with the Southern party. A mere enumeration of the successive struggles will show this. They have always arisen when new outlying territory had to be dealt with, and the conditions determined for its transition from mere Public Land to incipient Political organisation. As Land, it is at Federal disposal: when settled and organised, at its own. By making the exclusion of slavery a prior condition of political admission, Congress may bespeak the soil for freedom. The "Democratic" party affects to regard such provisions as an improper forestalling of State rights, though never disinclined to obtain a remission of their stringency at the hands of Congress. Three great masses of Territory have furnished the battle-ground of this political dispute:—the Northwest Territory, from the Ohio to the sources of the Mississippi;—the Louisiana purchase of 1803, from the Gulf of Mexico to the sources of the Missouri;—and the acquisitions from Mexico, including Texas, New Mexico, and California.

In 1787, July 13th, Congress *unanimously* passed the celebrated *Ordinance* "for the government of the Territory of the United States, Northwest of the Ohio;" which closed with the following "unalterable article:"

"There shall be neither Slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in punishment of crimes, whereof the parties shall be duly convicted."

Here, then, at the outset of the history, a concurrent voice declares the power of Congress to predestine the "domestic institutions" of future States, and its will to close them against slavery. True, the present Federal Constitution was not ratified till more than two years later,—November 1789. But in the very first session of Congress held under it, the validity of the "Ordinance" was recognised: its provisions being extended to new Territory ceded to the Union by North Carolina and Georgia,—with one unfortunate exception,—of "the article

which forbids slavery." The exception secured Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi to the slave interest; as the Ordinance itself had predetermined to freedom the soil of the future Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

Yet even this Northwestern country, being tainted by Virginian settlers, did but sulkily accept its blessing. Between 1803 and 1807, three or four applications to Congress were made by the inhabitants, praying to be relieved for ten years from the prohibition of slavery: and twice at least did Select Committees report to the House in their favour. But though the old unanimity was broken, the Legislature had not yet learned the democratic version of "unalterable articles:" and the "Ordinance" was sustained.

For a virgin soil, the seat of no prior rights, the simple veto of this "Ordinance" sufficed. But the Louisiana acquisition had been under the sovereignties of Spain and France, both of which had legalised slavery. It was only, however, at its Southern extremity, formed into the state of Louisiana in 1811 (whence Arkansas was subsequently detached), that the institution had real possession and remained undisputed: and after this portion had politically defined itself, the opportunity was favourable for rescuing the vast residuary region (under the name of Missouri Territory) from a curse which had scarcely straggled into it. Few, however, as the slaves upon it were, the object could not be accomplished without direct provision for the extinction of their actual status, as well as against any further importations. Whether the prerogative of Congress extended to positive, though only prospective, manumission on the public lands, was more open to constitutional doubt than its simply preventive power. Nevertheless, when Missouri applied for admission as a State in 1818, the House of Representatives passed, by small but repeated majorities, a proviso, barring the introduction of more slaves, and freeing at the age of twenty-five all children born after the Act of admission to the Union. The Senate struck out the proviso, and the Bill fell through.

Missouri, however, was not to be kept outside from deference to a political balance: and next year the question of her admission came up again. The same disagreement between the two houses reappeared in spite of repeated manœuvres to evade it: the Senate rejecting, the Representatives demanding, an exclusion of slavery from the proposed State. A new feature, however, was introduced into the case by Southern ingenuity, and succeeded in resolving the strife. The Upper House said to the Lower:—"Take away your restriction from Missouri State, and we will agree to put it on the residue of Missouri

*Territory.*" The bait was taken: the reversion of freedom in the future was accepted in compensation for immediate extension of slavery. Missouri got her "institution," with its political consequences; and the North, a piece of paper, with these words:

*"And be it further enacted, That in all that territory ceded by France to the United States under the name of Louisiana which lies north of 36° 30' north latitude, excepting only such part thereof as is included within the limits of the State contemplated by this Act, Slavery and involuntary servitude otherwise than in punishment of crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall be and is hereby for ever prohibited."*

This is the celebrated Missouri Compromise, carried in February 1820, by a majority of 90 against 87.

Five-and-twenty years elapsed, and the parties in this contest stood face to face again;—not now to constitute their own territory, but to appropriate foreign soil. Dr. Channing, in one of the noblest political pamphlets ever produced, has made the story of Texas universally known. It was notoriously in the Slave-interest that the land was overrun, disturbed, revolutionised, annexed. Due warning was given to the North by many a faithful observer: and, in addition to the hatred of Slave-extension, the crisis must have enlisted whatever feeling there was of national honour and good faith. Yet this new issue, offering so much more vulnerable surface, passed to its decision more easily than any previous one. The majorities were larger in 1845 than in 1820: and the utmost that the free-soil party could achieve was to trace across the new region the magic line of 36° 30', which divides the guilt from the innocence of slavery. A vote of 134 against 77 legalised the gains of usurpation, and out of a territory unpolluted by servitude carved for the future of the Union five States foredoomed to bear the curse.

Boundary questions springing out of the new acquisition occasioned the Mexican war; which again brought in fresh territorial spoils to be divided between the slave condition and the free. Military distinction having won the President's Chair for an honest man who would not truckle to the South (General Taylor), the free-soil party acquired for a time fresh spirit and hope: and in the discussions respecting New Mexico and California, the Lower House showed an increased disposition to press inhibitions of Slavery. But the pertinacity of the Senate producing a "dead-lock," Mr. Clay interposed and achieved his final act of pacification in the celebrated "Compromise of 1850." Before it passed, he himself had been withdrawn from the Sen-

ate by ill-health, and General Taylor had died and been succeeded by Mr. Fillmore. By what marvellous construction this jumble of measures was accepted as a *compromise* remains an impenetrable mystery. What did it concede to the North?—this only, that the Slave-market *within* the District of Columbia should be shifted to the outside. What did it secure to the South? (1) A renunciation on the part of Congress of all right to interfere with the internal Slave-trade; (2) an exemption of California, New Mexico, and Utah, from all restriction as to Slavery; (3) the revolting Fugitive Slave Law. We know nothing more unaccountable in political history, than the sudden prostration of the free-soil party at this crisis of American affairs. That they could for a moment look on the terms vouchsafed by Mr. Clay as any thing short of ignominious surrender is the clearest proof of weakness, pusillanimity, and division. The prohibition of slavery which Congress refused to apply was imposed upon California by her gold. The social state produced by the nature of her wealth is incompatible with “involuntary servitude;” and at her own desire she was admitted as a free State. Economical necessity, not moral or political tendency, determined her happier fate.

The disgraces of 1850, however, seemed as if they must really be the last. The very matter of contention,—it was supposed,—was exhausted. The land that remained for Federal disposal was North of 36° 30', and was shielded from controversy by the settlement of 1820. Consoled by this assurance, Boston permitted her streets to become the hunting-ground of the slave-catcher, and lent her courts, her officers, her citizens in aid of his pursuit. She performed her odious engagement; but is disappointed of her virtuous reward. Emboldened by invariable success, and aided by a Pierce administration, the Southern leaders resolved to push their advantage: and to organise the remainder of the Northwest Territory without any regard to the Missouri Ordinance. The events are too recent, and have been too fertile in astonishing results, to need recital. In May 1854, the Act to organise the territories of Nebraska and Kansas was passed, expressly leaving it open to the inhabitants to introduce slavery, if they chose. This violation of the Law of 1820 was carried in the Lower House by 113 votes against 100, and in the Upper by 35 against 13. The debate, often discreditable to the temper of the Legislature, was redeemed by a speech from Mr. Seward, Senator of New York, so calm, masterly, and high-minded, as to leave the strongest impression of his statesmanlike character.

The original rule of American usage undoubtedly was, that the Federal government is the government of the territories.

Under protection of this principle the whole power of the Union had again and again been brought to bear upon a particular region on or before its candidature for admission to the system, and imposed conditions to guard the general well-being against special and local interests. The democratic leaders are intent on subverting this rule of Constitutional law: and, under cover of their doctrine, the slaveholding interest, which is essentially local, has escaped the ban of the general Legislature, and carried its cause into its own sectional court. This was a safe game, so long as the geographical conditions favoured their "institution," and kept the Yankees off. There could be no doubt how the Texan adventurers would settle the labour-question, when left open to them. But it was otherwise with Kansas, which yields no tropical products; where, as in Missouri, the hemp and tobacco fields would supply the chief employment of the African labourer; and whither the Northern emigrant is as likely to find his way as the Southern. In such a region, slavery was not secured by merely throwing it open to local choice. If it was to be determined by vote upon the spot, there must be a dash made at the suffrage, and the ballot-box be made to speak in the right sense. The enterprise organised for this purpose, under the auspices of a Senator and acting Vice-President of the United States (Atchison), reads like a romance even to those who are most credulous of political and personal infamy. We need not repeat a thrice-told tale: how armed bands from a neighbouring State carried the polling-booths at the point of the bowie-knife, and created a Legislature by votes of which four-fifths were illegal: how this spurious Assembly enacted, on behalf of slavery, laws suppressing all liberty of speech, of the press, or of political action,—in terms and under penalties paralleled perhaps in the paroxysms of tyrannical rage, but without example in any written code: how the real settlers, not content with repudiating the acts of this body, elected one of their own, which met at Topeka, and pronounced in favour of free labour:—and how the President of the United States, after dispersing the Topeka Assembly by military force, and owning the fraud and violence of the terrorist parliament, proceeded to recognise and execute its atrocious enactments, and to invest with official authority the ruffians who procured them. The important questions are, first, what has been the action and temper of Congress in relation to these outrageous transactions? and next,—since new elections have taken place in the very midst of the Kansas excitement,—what is the political verdict of the Nation on the most palpable issue of right or wrong ever submitted to a people?

To reach a summary answer to the first question, we must

cut through a tangle of parliamentary obstruction and complication, which almost makes one despair of representative government. Majority reports and minority reports,—votes registered and votes rescinded,—considerations adjourned and reconsiderations laid on the table,—contradictory bills entering the lists at the opposite doors, of the bicameral legislature and annihilating each other in the lobby between,—strings of amendments, that differ merely in word and postpone defeat only by renewing and multiplying it,—motions of adjournment, of “higher privilege,” of reference to committees,—all conceivable devices for disturbing deliberation and hindering action, confuse the records of Congress, and attest the fatal predominance of party passion. It is not wonderful that the result was purely negative. The Lower House, having sent a commission of inquiry into Kansas, and learned every thing from an elaborate report, recognised the acts of the Topeka Assembly, and passed (by a majority of *two*) a Bill to admit Kansas as a free State. The Senate, on the other hand, recognised the usurping Legislature, and passed (by a majority of 33 against 12) a Bill for constituting Kansas through its officials and authority, and so determining the soil to slavery. As neither House would agree to the measure of the other, the controversy stands over for legislative decision under the new régime. Meanwhile, the measures of the ruffian-parliament are *in possession*: the free settlers have been driven out, the United States’ troops are on the spot to protect the political gains of lawlessness and crime: and an invasion which, in its conception and execution, has exhausted the varieties of infamy, retains a complete success. That Congress could terminate its session and disperse from Washington, leaving in this condition a territory under its charge, strikes us as either an unexampled dereliction of public duty, or an alarming proof of incapacity. The brutal assault on Mr. Sumner, for exposing the degenerate departure of the South from every noble American tradition, was the act of an individual; it might proceed from any fortuitous savage thrown into the House by the lottery of a general election; and only proves the real inner power, the agitating sway of accomplished intellect and noble speech over dumb passions and strong arms. The virtual impunity of the assailant, and his return to Washington as the accepted hero of his State, are serious signs of a corrupted social sentiment. But the legislative abandonment of Kansas to a triumphant terrorism, which has brought the very name of Law into contempt, under a federal executive prostituted to the service of conspiracy and fraud, indicates political or moral incompetency for the highest functions of a civilised State.

And now, as to the second question ; what verdict has the Nation, by its recent suffrage, pronounced upon these things ? It has given to the Slave-interest some thirty more votes in the Lower House, and a four years' additional lease of the Executive administration. It is impossible to break the force of this tremendous fact. The Northern power, roused by the intensest provocation, united by incontestable danger, fresh from the detection of shameless designs, has strained her moral resources to the utmost ;—and has been signally defeated. The ballot-boxes of the Union have emphatically declared in favour of EXTENSION of Slavery ;—extension over their own free soil ; and extension by seizure of what is not their own ;—in both instances at the cost of violated faith, and with disregard of positive engagements both national and international. Never was an election cast more entirely on a single intelligible issue. For months it had been the sole domestic topic of discussion ; had touched the zeal of the coldest ; had extinguished political neutrality and moral indifference, and forced every one to take sides. The struggle in Kansas and the half-perpetrated murder on the floor of the Senate-house kept one phase of the question before the electors : the Ostend Manifesto recommending the appropriation of Cuba, and signed by Mr. Buchanan, fixed attention on the other. If ever, then, the preponderating sentiment of a people can be inferred from the balance of their franchise, we may surely apply the test on occasion of the recent election. The inference must always be qualified by a remembrance of the peculiar distribution of the suffrage in the States. The number of representatives sent by each State to the Lower House,—and in like manner the number of electors it contributes to the electoral College which chooses the President,—is in the ratio of its population ; New York, as highest in the census, sending 35 ; Pennsylvania, which is next, 27 ; and so on. In the free states (where, on an average, 14,472 voters choose one representative), the elections must perfectly express the dominant opinion of the male adult citizens. The franchise is regarded there as a purely personal right, and is in no way qualified by property. In the slave-states, the aggregate of votes can never exceed two-thirds of the male adult population :—the white man having a vote on his own account, and, if a proprietor, three additional votes for every set of five slaves possessed by him. Of the votes thus constituted, 8,896 suffice to appoint one representative. The general result of this arrangement is, that there are 90 members for the slave-states, each one of whom represents 68,725 whites ; and 144 members for the free-states, each one of whom represents 91,935 whites. The votes conferred by the mere possession of slaves,

—resting on property-right as distinguished from personal,—are sufficient to return 30 members to the House. As there are not more than 92,257 owners of ten slaves and upwards, it is evident that the Southern representation must practically be in the hands of an oligarchy: the more so, as the degraded condition of the “white trash” that hang on the outskirts of the estates, and form the rabble of the towns, reduces them to mere tools of neighbouring power. In judging of the *moral* significance of an election, allowance must be made for these things. But in computing *political* prospects, they are factors in the calculation, instead of deductions from the result: for they are fixed data in the Constitution, which spread wherever it goes. The inequality of condition they establish between the Northern and the Southern element in the Commonwealth only gives intenser interest to their political competition for new soil.

There is a prevailing impression, we believe, that Mr. Buchanan's election has been carried by a narrow majority; and that, in that respect, it presents a very favourable contrast with the previous defeat of General Scott by Mr. Pierce. The impression arises from limiting the comparison to the *electoral* vote; which gave the Chair to Buchanan by 174 against 114 for Fremont; to Pierce, in 1852, by 254 against 42 for Scott. When we pass behind these figures, and count out of the ballot-boxes the tickets of the *popular* vote, we meet with a very different result. At this primary pole, Pierce received 1,590,490 votes against 1,378,583 for Scott. Buchanan has received 1,649,362 votes against 1,168,174 for Fremont:—the victor rising considerably above, the vanquished falling yet farther below, the corresponding numbers at the previous election. The decisiveness of the popular *pronunciamento* becomes still more conspicuous when we observe that Buchanan could have spared *more than four-fifths of his votes in the slave States*, and yet have polled a large majority over his antagonist. Not a solitary vote was cast for Fremont except in the free States: and even here on his own ground, the balance was so even, that Buchanan, with little more than a sixth of his remaining votes, would have turned it against him. The free-State return for Fremont amounted to 1,168,174; for Buchanan to 1,036,247; who wanted, therefore, from the rest of the Union but 131,927 votes; but actually received thence 613,115. The truth, then, cannot be disguised that, of the inhabitants of free soil, nearly one-half have no desire to prevent the extension of slavery, but will support it under the severest tests that shame and disgust can apply. Even the State of William Penn gave so decided a preponderance to the successful candidate, that he would still have carried its suffrage, had the



Fillmore party transferred to Fremont every one of their 82,229 votes. Nor is the existence of a powerful Southern party in the free States less distinctly marked by the Congressional elections. The free States, we have said, send to the House of Representatives 144 members: the slave States only 90. Yet even during the accumulated insults recently heaped upon the North, and under favour of Mr. Pierce's declining popularity, the opposition could barely keep the balance of party even, and register an occasional majority of two or three. And on appeal to the country, a large working majority for the Southern schemes was immediately obtained, and the Lower House put in harmony with the Upper.

These phenomena are far too vast, and are presented on an occasion far too simple and critical, to be resolved into mere accidents of party engineering. With grief we come to the conclusion, that during the present century American Slavery has gained not simply area, and numbers, and economical interests, but a more terrible support;—the dominant sentiment of the nation. Under the conditions of that expanding society, straggling into the wilderness behind and inundated by a flood of miscellaneous emigration in front, Southern recklessness appeals to universal suffrage with more success than Northern thoughtfulness and reverence for law. Would that we could discover evidence, that the political difficulties of such a country had been lessened by the moral clearness and faithfulness of its natural teachers,—the clergy of its several communions. Seventy years ago, politicians and men of the world, like Jefferson and Madison, were ashamed of slavery, spoke of it under their breath, and wanted to keep every trace of it off the face of their constitution, and out of sight of history. At present, professed ministers of Christ unblushingly defend it, blandly anoint it with the oil of a spurious sanctity, and bless its black banner going forth to new conquests. We must confirm this statement by one example; and, that it may not be a *morceau* of private eccentricity, but as public and official as possible, we will take it from the ministrations of a United-States Chaplain, on duty in Kansas, during the spring of 1855. We quote from the narrative of a most reliable eye and ear witness, Rev. Frederick Starr, a Presbyterian Clergyman, himself so "moderate" as to have been unanimously acquitted of "Abolitionism" by a Lynch-court of "Border-ruffians." The scene is laid in Missouri, on the eve of the invasion to storm and stuff the ballot-boxes:

"The two parties brought out the candidates, and Missouri was not idle. At Platte city, the county-seat of Platte county, Atchison's home, on the 5th day of March 1855, a Pro-slavery mass-meeting was held. Several speakers addressed it, among them General Atchison, and *the Rev. Leander Kerr*, United-States Chaplain to the army at Fort Leaven-

worth. Atchison declared, 'WE MUST and we WILL make *Kansas a Slave-State*, PEACEABLY *if we can*, forcibly and at the point of the BAYONET *if we MUST*.' I was informed that Atchison was very drunk when he was speaking. The Rev. Leander Kerr made an address, and read a doggerel poem on Abolitionists; these he published the next week by request. Mr. Kerr was a *United-States* officer, salaried from the *United-States* treasury, paid with money three-fourths of which comes from the North. *This man*, previous to an election in *Kansas* passes from *Kansas* over into *Missouri* to stimulate a *Missouri mob* to come into *Kansas* and violate the rights of American citizens, and to slaughter innocent persons, against whom by his libels and falsehoods he has stirred up the vengeance and brutality of ignorant and ferocious Southerners. But listen while he talks for himself:

'And now to ascertain your position, and what are your duties in the contest before you; let us ascertain the cause for which you are contending. What is that cause? *It is the most just, righteous and holy*, in which men *were ever* ENGAGED! And who are your enemies? They are the *most unscrupulous of men*; STEEPED from the crowns of their heads to the soles of their feet in the BLACKEST INFAMY OF PERDITION, they are of their Father the DEVIL, and the works of their father they *are doing and will do* IF LET ALONE.

'Go, then [to *Kansas*], as men, as patriots, as Christians, and do your duty to yourselves, your country and your GOD. Do gentlemen talk of honourable and lawful means to PREVENT all this mass of Eastern abomination, moral, social, and infidel, from ENTERING among you? If a midnight robber were to attempt to break into my quarters, I would avail myself of the most efficient means at my command to expel him. I would not sit down to ponder upon *honourable and lawful* means; the only law I would recognise in the case would be the law of self-preservation. *Talk not* of honourable and lawful means, save the law of self-preservation against men who trample alike the laws of heaven and your country under their feet; *men who know as LITTLE of HONOUR* in their souls as a monkey knows of the complicated mechanism of a steam-engine. Away with such paltry sentimentalism! It is as much out of place as lullaby songs and nursery tales are out of place in the heat of battle or in the midst of storm and shipwreck. HONOURABLE warfare is for HONOURABLE HEROES, not for ROBBERS AND BANDITTI; AND SUCH THESE ABOLITIONISTS ARE!'"\*

Moral degradation and profaneness like this can find, it would seem, a Society to accept them as representative of the religion of Christ! It is not the only instance of clerical corruption cited by Mr. Starr: and it is evident that there is in his opinion a class of preachers of this type. However small it may be, it shows the tendency of Slave-championship in its last resort. But far short of this, the presence of the curse upon the Southern land appears to have cowed and sophisticated the whole spirit of the churches. It would be too much to expect that

\* See Mr. Starr's Report of the outrages in *Kansas*, in the *New York Weekly Tribune*, Saturday, Nov. 8, 1856;—the most complete narrative we have seen, from a witness resident more than five years on the spot.

the tone of religious teaching should remain altogether unaffected by the social atmosphere around. But it is a humiliating spectacle when the collective Christianity of a country surrenders the lead of moral reforms, and follows with poor inertia the infatuated vigour of selfishness, or the conservative creeping of atheistic distrust. We fear it is too true that the slave has in other ages owed to Catholic Christianity mitigations and deliverance, which the Protestantism of the new world is little likely to achieve for him again. We do not forget the noble exceptions: but in the main we recognise in Mrs. Stowe's satire on the clergy a picture as faithful as it is sad.

When, therefore, we hear the generous prophecy that American slavery is on the eve of dying out, and test it by the several indications of historical tendency, we find little ground for early hope, and have to fall back on that faith in ultimate good which survives all temporary disappointment. Steadily, yet rapidly, the Southern oligarchy, with increasing support from the free-soil democracy, had advanced its designs at length completely unveiled; and now holds with firm grasp the entire machinery of government. What resources are there for turning back the tide? Can we depend for the future on greater union in the North? May we put down its whole probable increase of wealth and numbers to the account of free-soil gain? If so, the issue is neither doubtful nor distant, and will contradict our fears; for the growth of all the social elements of power perpetually increases the relative weight of the North. But hitherto the rapid development of the free States has proved an advantage to the *Southern* politics. The old New-England type of sentiment and patriotism has been constantly dwindling into smaller relative dimensions. The mercantile element,—always of quietest passions but also of faintest conscience,—has assumed huge dimensions. And the plebeian population of the large towns,—at once self-willed and flexible, with the pride of citizenship and the antipathies of race,—constitutes a formidable rather than a hopeful political instrument. At the recent election five of the free States supported the Southern policy: and Iowa is the only one, out of New England and not in contact with British land or waters, that cast a Northern vote. Certain it is that every ten years' census thus far has swelled the democratic list far more than its rival. It is impossible, with due regard to the lessons of the past, to regard Northern development as synonymous with Slave-power limitation.

If, indeed, we already saw an end to the land-claims of the planters' party,—if they had reached any impassable limit,—the prospect would be brighter. The area awaiting settlement by freemen, and unlikely to have any worse fate, is still immense.

If we give Kansas and Mr. Buchanan the benefit of a favourable hope, and reckon it in with Nebraska, Minnesota, Oregon and Washington, as free soil, there remain no fewer than 1,148,727 square miles, to be covered by industry and institutions akin to those of Massachusetts and Ohio: and if, meanwhile, every other barrier stood fast, the preponderance of the better social element would be decisive. But nowhere, unhappily, are the landmarks more shifting than in the South, or the gains from their retreat more gigantic. Mexico, already so heavily mulcted, seems at this very hour to be lapsing into final disorganisation; and how soon its affairs may be administered from Washington Mr. Buchanan perhaps might be able to tell. Central America, first traversed by Californian commerce, next invaded by Walker's filibusters, then cleared of British claims, begins to guess its political destiny, and to reveal its capabilities to the keen eye of the hungry Republic. These continental regions alone, with Utah, New Mexico, and the Indian grounds, open to the Southern interest an area of 1,828,253 square miles. The whole vitality of slavery depends on perpetual spread and advance: and we as much doubt its decline while it can push into new fields as we believe in its death when its path is stopped. The successful politicians of the South are fully alive to the inherent necessity of self-extension belonging to their "peculiar institution." They have it evidently in contemplation to form a vast Slave-Empire, with its base on the capital and population of the North, its outposts on the isthmus, and its sweep over the Caribbean sea. Wild as the project seems, it is not without its favouring conditions. It speaks invitingly to that passion for empire and belief in his country's "destiny" into which the modern American's patriotism appears to have resolved itself: and which makes even the New Englander love the rights of freedom much, continued union more, and sway over the world's destinies most of all. It is rendered tempting by the facility of its first steps,—nay, the difficulty of avoiding them: for, with Texas already in the Republic, how could the fragments of a disintegrated Mexico remain out? and with an indefinite supply of Walkers easy to adopt but impossible to control, what can be done but accept the freebooters' spoil, and re-engage the maps?—and with Cuba in the hands of a weak and needy government, and St. Domingo a paradise in anarchy, little more than connivance is needed to get them invaded and surmounted by the stars and stripes. And then Jamaica must surely follow? In that case, yes: only, as Jamaica is *not* to follow, neither must Cuba and Hayti precede: and we see in a moment how the plan, once in full sail, is sure to strike upon a reef, and incur unknown disasters. In truth, while it staves

off the problem of the moment it is surrounded by frightful risks. Were it in human nature to work out schemes that dizzy the imagination and make the passions drunk, without a slip of prudence or a word of wantonness and pride, we can just conceive the secrecy of Talleyrand and the daring of Napoleon combined to be capable of realising the dream in the course of two generations. But Providence never permits the Spirit of Evil to wield for any length of time *both* the intellect and the will of vast multitudes of men: and the one is sure to betray the other. Already, the Southern trumpet has been blown too loud: and we should not be surprised if Mr. Buchanan should begin by softening its tone and allaying the temper which from New England has made stern reply. The Northern resources are essential to the Southern schemes: and no strain must be put upon the Union greater than even Boston conservatism can bear. It is a delicate question, how far the ruling oligarchy can carry the subservient free States;—how long they will continue to furnish pliant politicians, and safe preachers, and the needful material of army, navy and finance. How many fugitive-slave cases will it take to sicken them of the connection?—how many contused Senators? how many lynched and tortured missionaries?—how many deceived and murdered immigrants? Perhaps with sufficient faculty of silence, and a Russian habit of stealth, the leaders might without challenge push their “institution” in any direction and to any extent, *short of the North itself*. But the Southern temper is impetuous and arrogant, and can neither observe a reticence nor respect a limit. Two years ago, the boast escaped from Senator Toombs (of Georgia) that “soon the master with his slaves will sit down at the foot of Bunker Hill Monument.” The Governor of South Carolina propounds, in his recent official message, the doctrine that all labour must again return into the hands of slaves. The abettors of the Kansas iniquity make no secret of their resolve,—now that the spell of the Missouri line is broken,—of overrunning the whole North with slaves and turning the federated continent into a vast house of bondage. There is a Nemesis for all this insolence: and if it be infatuated enough to believe its own predictions, and attempt their realisation, the free States will be driven to separate, and the splendid visions of the rest will vanish in the double retribution of civil and of servile war. Should Mr. Buchanan’s prudence avail to curb and divert the aggressive spirit, to charm it away from its ill-chosen field in Kansas, and turn it loose on tropical latitudes, it is probable that this check from domestic disunion might be indefinitely delayed.

But while one question is closed, another is opened. You refrain from collision with confederates in the North, only to

try the endurance of foreigners in the South. Can it be expected that the Old World will become a meek convert to the gospel of "destiny" so current in the New?—that for its sake Europe will renounce the law of nations and the guarantees of Right?—that England in particular will repent of her repentance towards the African race, betray to a new oppressor the people she had ceased to oppress, and permit her language, framed for free men's lips, to be corrupted by her own sons, at the very heart of her colonial empire, into the dialect of universal slavery? Upon what ground can the statesmen at Washington claim exemption for their country from the restraints of justice and mutual respect which other nations own, and indulge themselves with an international morality worthy the deck of an Algerine? With a class of men who could seriously embrace and apply the principle of the Ostend manifesto, negotiation and compact would be a mockery; for the only right it asserts is the right to do wrong. If Spain should refuse to sell the sovereignty of Cuba to the United States, "then," say Mr. Buchanan and his associates, "by every law, human and divine, we shall be justified in wresting it from Spain, IF WE HAVE THE POWER!" Had the recklessness of the Southern policy confined itself to the *continent*, it might perhaps have long evaded the chances of arrest. But if it will insist on *putting to sea*, it directly invokes European war and interrupts its own secure development by enormous and gratuitous hazards. Through even this danger (though it were dishonour) we believe, however, the Northern States would suffer themselves to be drawn, rather than relinquish the Union so sacred in their eyes. But there is one extremity and anachronism of crime which would conclusively alienate *both* the free States and the European nations, and heartily unite New and Old England against an apostate South: we mean, the re-opening of the African Slave-trade. That is a question which Christendom will not condescend to argue over again: it has been flung into the deadhouse where a thousand grim barbarities lie; and those horrid chains are rusting with the sword of the gladiator and the rack of the Inquisition. Yet, at this very hour, a Special Committee of the South-Carolina legislature is in session on this matter, with instructions to report on the expediency of reviving the Slave-trade; and, in order to render the investigation more complete, has asked permission to sit continuously through the parliamentary recess. The committee was appointed on the recommendation of the governor: and as it must be drawn from the class of persons who returned the Hon. Preston S. Brooks to Congress in express approval of his dealings with Mr. Sumner's head, it is not doubtful in what spirit the investigation will be made.

The gentlemen of South Carolina are accustomed to be "a law unto themselves," and are little likely to regard the scruples of any other law. And being far too "chivalrous" for prudence, there may perhaps be a special charm for them in any measure that has so strong a name as Piracy, and defies the indignation of the civilised world.

There are doubtless a few European statesmen who are aware of the gravity of the present crisis in American society: but its fearful significance seems hidden from the mass of even our cultivated and thoughtful men. If we read it aright, the time has gone by for discussing the *removal* of slavery;—the only problem now is, whether it is possible to arrest its *extension*. The oligarchy which protects it not only possesses every South State-legislature, where alone its severity could be mitigated or its term of existence abridged; but has a firm grasp of the Federal government, which rules the *Territories* and predetermines the conditions for *future States*. Not the faintest symptom appears in any slave State of a desire to wipe out the blot. Henry Clay himself is mentioned as "that black-hearted traitor:" and did any member of the House at Richmond or Charleston propose to substitute prædial serfdom for personal bondage, to prevent the separation of families, and to educate the planters' people, he would pay the penalty of exile and ruin. The only plan of amelioration, the mention of which is ever tolerated, is the colonisation to Liberia; and *that*, only because it is too innocent to be of any avail, and soothingly occupies the conscience of weak-minded clergymen, who might else grow benevolent and troublesome. At Washington, where alone the sentiment of the free States can be brought to bear, the Constitution limits discussion and legislation on the subject to its Federal relations,—within the District of Columbia and on the unsettled lands: which last the victory of the democratic party has now withdrawn from the favourable action of Congress. That the curse should *recede* seems impossible: and the only practical question concerns its mode and direction of *advance*. If it becomes aggressive on the *peculium* of the North, the Union will break:—if on the islands of the tropical seas, foreign war will ensue:—if on the African coasts, *both* these disasters will follow. And in any of these cases, it would need a bold prophet to name the next step: but the strain put upon the South would be so great, that in some way or other, more or less terrible, the "institution" for which the storm was braved would probably have vanished ere the clouds were gone.

There is one case which might possibly open a more favourable prospect. Should Mexico verify the rumours of her mineral wealth, and prove another California, she must remain a land of free labour, and become a final limit to the slave-exten-

sion which her fertility and weakness now invite. Annexed or unannexed, she would interpose a bar between Texas and Central America, and present to the fugitive a Southern Canada at the very gate of his house of bondage. Once encircled with a cordon of free soil, the slave-land would have its fee-simple reduced to a lease. The term might still not expire for generations: but the freehold of the oppressor would be gone.

It is little that England can do towards solving the domestic problems of a susceptible people, not yet forgetful of old injuries, and avowedly preferring even Russian sympathies to her own. The negative policy of abstinence and forbearance, a careful avoidance of every untenable pretension, an ungrudging allowance of free scope to the energies of a kindred nation, so long as they are true to the institutions they inherit and the liberties they won from us, seem to constitute the essence of our duty and our power. In drawing as closely as possible the ties which unite us with America, it is, however, incumbent on us to affect no disguise of our real and universal sentiment on the great question which agitates the country. The question is a *world*-question, on which we have pronounced: and our sympathies are with the group of States whose voice is with our own, whose action was before our own. Let it be clearly understood, that though we institute no propaganda of freedom, we mean to protect lands and people intrusted to us from any crusade of slavery. Our history, God knows, has many blots of shame: and among the darkest are those with which the New World has a right to reproach us. So much the less can it be expected that we shall recede from the one act of reparation we have stretched an arm over the Atlantic to achieve; and shall not jealously watch the reactionary wave thrown off from the slave-bound coast towards the liberated islands of the West. We naturally wish for every thing that may embarrass the schemes of slavery-extension: and it would be folly to make any secret of the wish. We wish that Spain would hasten emancipation in Cuba: so as to discourage invaders by the double task of conquest of the land and of subjugation of the people. We wish that our Indian authorities may stimulate to the utmost the growth and preparation of cotton in the East: so as to relax the tension of production and the rush into fresh fields in the tropical States of America, and to set free the moral sympathies of our mercantile classes at home from an oppressive reciprocity with the planters' interest. Should democratic impetuosity precipitate a struggle between the conflicting elements in America, we are bound in heavy and not ignoble securities to give our word of hope to liberty and right: and would fain be without too tempting a stake in the continuance and prosperity of slavery and wrong.



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[This is far the pleasantest literary product of the present quarter. Milton's name, however, has no business in the title ; all the lectures upon him having been lost. The recovery of these lectures is the recovery of a little of Coleridge's very best criticism. Mr. Collier's recollections of his conversation are good ; and the complete list of the "emendations" has long been wanted.]

The English of Shakspeare illustrated, in a Philological Commentary on his Julius Cæsar. By George L. Craik. Chapman and Hall.

[A very good unpretending book. It professes to be meant only for the unlearned ; but few who have not devoted much time to the philological study of English, and of Shakspeare's English, will find it unprofitable reading.]

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Memorials of James Watt. By George Williamson, Esq. Printed for the Watt Club. Constable.

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Arctic Explorations. By Dr. Kane. 2 vols. Trübner.

- Later Biblical Researches in Palestine and the adjacent Regions. By Edward Robinson, D.D., LL.D. John Murray.  
[Travels of interest, but given in needless and wearisome detail.]
- Southern Africa. By F. Fleming. Hall and Co.
- Letters from the Seat of War. By a Staff-Officer. Murray.
- Rambles in America. By John Shaw. Hope.
- Ancient India. By Mrs. Speir. Smith, Elder, and Co.  
[A very good book; the foundation is laid in real and solid knowledge; the style is tasteful; and the book is beautifully illustrated and got up.]
- Twelve Months with the Bashi-Bazouks. By Edward Money, Lieut.-Col. Imperial Ottoman Army, and late Captain Bashi-Bazouks. Chapman and Hall.  
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- Pen and Pencil Pictures. By Thomas Hood. Hurst and Blackett.  
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- Florence Templar. Smith, Elder, and Co.  
[Graceful and very interesting, with considerable artistic skill. Like so many other recent novels, it is life seen entirely from one point of view—painted on the camera-obscura of a woman's mind; but the observing medium is in this case clearly a delicate and thoughtful one.]
- Ivors. By the Author of "Amy Herbert," &c. Longman and Co.  
[Miss Sewell's stories are too moral and ecclesiastical in mould for perfect nature or perfect grace. We are tired of her ever-repeated Christian mothers. This tale, however, has rather more variety, and perhaps less divinity.]
- Tender and True. By the Author of "Clara Morison." 2 vols. Smith, Elder, and Co.  
[The merit of this tale lies in a grave quiet simplicity of tone. It is more agreeable reading than many more pretentious novels.]
- Kathie Brande: The Fireside History of a Quiet Life. By Holme Lee. Smith, Elder, and Co.  
[Grave and quiet, as it professes to be; but able and characteristic writing, and interesting reading.]
- Kate Coventry. By G. J. Whyte Melville. John W. Parker and Son.  
[This story is a reprint from *Fraser's Magazine*. It appears to be decidedly clever; it is unquestionably very fast.]
- Round the Fire; Six Stories (for Children). Smith, Elder, and Co.  
[Simple, and very interesting for children.]

# THE NATIONAL REVIEW.

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APRIL 1857.

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## ART. I.—AURORA LEIGH.

*Aurora Leigh.* By Elizabeth Barrett Browning. London: Chapman and Hall. 1857.

*Poems.* By Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Fourth Edition. 3 vols. London: Chapman and Hall. 1856.

It is a rash and futile effort of criticism to limit the forms in which poetic conception is to embody itself. The criticism of artistic forms is the science of an art. It measures a world which is always growing; and its dry system is at any moment liable to be burst asunder by the vital energy of the life to which it professes to assign its appropriate framework. Its work is the same as that of the lawyer, who, having reduced a medley of judicial decisions to an *ex-post-facto* "principle," as he fondly calls it, is suddenly called on to make room in it for a new decision in the Exchequer Chamber. For the poet is greater than the critic; and when the latter says, "thus far shalt thou come, and no farther," he stands like the flattered king upon the sands, and every new wave washes the ground from under his feet. So, too, of the distinctions between prose and poetry, the discussion of which is but a branch of the same school of inquiry. It is idle to attempt to assign them beforehand their respective boundaries. To use one of Mrs. Browning's metaphors with as much boldness and as little appropriateness as she herself is apt to employ them, they

"Play at leap-frog over the god Term."

That certain rules of composition sustain themselves at all, is due to the fact, that creative genius of a high order is not impatient of forms; but rather loves, on the contrary, to have certain limits

defined for it, and to be freed to some extent from "the weight of too much liberty." Shakespeare did not fret because tragedies are limited to five acts, nor Milton quarrel with the formal conditions of an epic poem.

Still, art is free; and when it chooses to break through old conditions which have been considered essential, and assume fresh forms, the new work vindicates or condemns itself. If it recommend itself to that ultimate human judgment with which the verdict lies, it takes its place in spite of all canons to the contrary; if not, it sinks into obscurity, or, if it lives at all, it is because some inner worth outweighs the faultiness and unfitness of the form in which it is embodied.

When, therefore, we say that Mrs. Browning has to some extent misconceived the sphere of verse in her novel of *Aurora Leigh*, and embarrassed herself with details of incident too complex for the rhythmical vehicle of expression, we make the assertion with as much modesty as a critic is capable of, and with a due consciousness that our conclusions are liable to be upset by any poet who chooses to produce a great and harmonious poem under conditions which we have pronounced to be ill adapted to his art. There is this strong fact, however, against the attempt to clothe the modern novel in verse, that verse was not the natural and spontaneous mode of expression which that kind of literature assumed. In all its stages of development, up to its present complex form, in which it fuses into a homogeneous new mould the old distinctions of epic and dramatic, it has always been in prose that its many gifted masters have found the medium for their utterance. At this day, to attempt to translate it into verse seems to us like an attempt to imitate in sculpture the "Transfiguration" of Raphael, or the "Blind Fiddler" of Wilkie. It does not follow, because verse is the highest instrument of expression, and finds a voice more ample and perfect than any other for the passion both of the imagination and the heart, that it has any claim in itself beyond this very fact of its being such true expression, or that you gain any thing by employing it for its own sake. It seems to us a decided loss of power to attempt to give a rhythmical form to the varied narration, the detailed conversation, and the minute and full-length representations of the modern conditions of social and individual life, which have already been so ably and so fully embodied in prose forms. We should go farther than to say merely that verse wants pliancy to adapt itself to those fine ramifications of external observation to which we have become accustomed, or that the contrast is too immediate between the every-day forms of speech which we are in the habit of using, and the same reproduced with a rhythmic cadence; we urge that there are many things

which, from their very nature, it is a breach of those essential harmonies to which, of all men, the poet should be most alive, to attempt to embody in the language of the imagination. Verse is two very different things; it may be used either as the expression of poetic thought, or as a mere external grace, to give a charm to narratives or descriptions, or pieces of humour, to which it is not in any sense necessary. Parts of Pope, of Crabbe, and of Prior, afford ready illustrations of this use of it. But when we speak of poetry, we mean, in general, verse used as the embodiment of poetic conception, to which it clings as the body of a man does to his spirit. It is possible to take this sort of expression, which true poetic conception demands, and use it for subject-matter which does not in itself require it; and, instead of letting the thought kindle the imagination for its own particular occasion, to maintain an artificial heat for general purposes. This is what is done throughout a great part of Mrs. Barrett Browning's poem. A greater master teaches another lesson. When his matter descends, Shakespeare's forms descend with it; and wherever the nature of his subject-matter demands it, he intersperses prose-scenes, or even prose-speeches, in his dramas; and more remarkable than these changes are the subtle variations in the rhythm, and in the warmth of the imaginative colouring, answering every where in the nicest correspondence to the level of the subject-matter. But Mrs. Browning maintains her high-unstooping flight over all the varied surface of her story. She dresses her poetry as the ancient actors did their persons; and like them, she loses in truthfulness and nicety of expression what she gains in external display; and it repels the modern reader to find, instead of changing feature and modulated voice, the rigid tragic mask and sounding mouthpiece of the Greek theatre. This undue poetic excitement shows itself in the imaginative diction alone, and is not accompanied by any corresponding elevation in the structure of the metre, or the flow of the rhythm: in these the approach to prose is made as close as possible, bearing some such analogy to ordinary poetry as recitative does to singing; for while the lines are rhythmical, the periods are almost all prosaic. The result we cannot help thinking a very unsatisfactory one; and when, in this semi-verse, semi-prose, the matter of the author comes couched in the most daring and far-fetched metaphor, it makes the reading inconceivably difficult and wearisome. Where the matter is such as to be in keeping with this high poetic utterance, as in the last pages of the book, there is enough to kindle the answering fire in the reader's brain; and the bold and passionate snatchings of the imagination at depths of meaning, which no other language but its own can compel to the surface, are intuitively followed and comprehended. It is otherwise when

ordinary conversation, discussion, narrative, reasoning, or self-communing, are expressed in the poetic forms which poetic matter alone justifies; clothed upon with purple diction, and made to glitter with blazing jewelry of metaphor; distracting the reader from the matter before him, annoying him with their inappropriateness, and often puzzling him to seize their meaning. Take as an instance this description of the paper and printing of Wolff's *Homer* :

“The kissing Judas, Wolff, shall go instead,  
Who builds us such a royal book as this  
To honour a chief-poet, folio-built,  
And writes above, ‘The house of Nobody:’  
Who floats in cream, as rich as any sucked  
From Juno’s breasts, the broad Homeric lines,  
And, while with their spondaic prodigious mouths,  
They lap the lucent margins as babe-gods,  
Proclaims them bastards. Wolff’s an atheist.”

Or read the following description of a lady tearing a letter; of the extravagance of which the author herself seems to be sensible, and which she half apologises for, and half justifies. But though a letter might possibly be torn under circumstances of weight and passion to justify such a simile, yet we cannot think that the destruction of an instrument of gift, even before the eyes of giver and lover, can warrant it :

“As I spoke, I tore  
The paper up and down, and down and up  
And crosswise, till it fluttered from my hands,  
As forest-leaves, stripped suddenly and rapt  
By a whirlwind on Valdarno, drop again,  
Drop slow, and strew the melancholy ground  
Before the amazed hills . . . why, so, indeed,  
I’m writing like a poet, somewhat large  
In the type of the image,—and exaggerate  
A small thing with a great thing, topping it!—  
But then I’m thinking how his eyes looked . . . his,  
With what despondent and surprised reproach!”

This want of accordance between the matter and the manner is not a superficial defect, it is connected with the fundamental characteristics of Mrs. Browning’s genius; rather, we ought to say, with a fundamental deficiency which leaves its trace on all her works, and limits powers which would otherwise lift her into the very highest ranks of the poetical hierarchy. But she is a poet cleft in half; she wants one whole side of the faculties of the artist; and though the other side be great beyond the ordinary proportions of our modern poets, the loss is one which necessarily affects the whole frame, can only be partially compensated by other excellencies, and can never be replaced.

The greatest poets have been those whose spirits are set in

such fine harmony with the world of things outside themselves, that you can scarcely say whether they breathe their own music, or it is breathed out of them by the influences which surround them. Wordsworth, indeed, is more of a conscious interpreter; but Shakespeare seems like some mighty organ, from which the passions, and the affections, and the characters of men, draw each its own tones; and Homer is the name not of a man but of a poem. These things are not really so. The poet does indeed create; but he creates from so complete a sympathy, that he is lost in his work, and it is as if the children of his imagination were the immediate offspring of nature herself. Such poets receive openly what they give, and give openly back what they have received. They are like the flowing rivers, which gather their waters from every source that earth affords; into which every scattered spring and land-draining brook empties its waters; which increase by the quick rains of heaven, the fleeting snow, and the gray dew from the grasses on their banks; which tinge their currents with a trace of every soil through which they pass; and as they flow on render out of the abundance of that they have received beauty and fertility and joy. Others there are, like great springs of clear water, which bubble up into some great reservoir; but are fed from secret and subterranean sources, whose strength and freshness seems to be in themselves, and by whose innate virtue man and beast are revived and strengthened. All poets partake more or less of the characteristics of each class; but perhaps no great poet has ever belonged so exclusively to the latter as Mrs. Browning. It is from the strength of her own soul, the resources of her own intellect, and the riches of her own heart, that she writes. She gives no voice to the world around her. It is herself she is pressed to utter. And this is not only the unconscious, but the direct and conscious aim of her striving. She even tells us it is so:

“ With stammering lips and insufficient sound  
I strive and struggle to deliver right  
That music of my nature, day and night,  
With dream and thought and feeling interwound,  
And inly answering all the senses round  
With octaves of a mystic depth and height,  
Which step out grandly to the infinite,  
From the dark edges of the sensual ground!  
This song of soul I struggle to outbear,  
Through portals of the sense sublime and whole,  
And utter all myself into the air.”

She is never the passive subject of that sort of inspiration by which some men almost unconsciously render back the impressions of things around them; what comes from her is part of her. It is the song of her own soul she “struggles to outbear,”



and she grasps the outer world to make it yield her a language. Not till a thing has become transmuted into the substance of her own mind does she feel the impulse to speak it; and then only she turns to external things, and her imagination ranges out through the circle of the universe to find some full and adequate voice for it. Shakespeare used himself to express other men. Mrs. Browning uses all things to express herself. The whole machinery of *Aurora Leigh*,—poetic conception, dramatic personages, varied incident,—are not shown for themselves, but to expound and elucidate one main and various subordinate ideas of the author. She holds that the poet must have lived his poetry before he writes it, and speaks passionately of the suffering and the effort that his career demands:

“ Art  
Sets action on the top of suffering:  
The artist’s part is both to be and do,  
Transfixing with a special, central power  
The flat experience of the common man,  
And turning outward, with a sudden wrench,  
Half agony, half ecstasy, the thing  
He feels the inmost: never felt the less  
Because he sings it. Does a torch less burn  
For burning next reflectors of blue steel,  
That *he* should be the colder for his place  
’Twixt two incessant fires,—his personal life’s,  
And that intense refraction which burns back  
Perpetually against him from the round  
Of crystal conscience he was born into  
If artist-born? O sorrowful great gift  
Conferred on poets, of a twofold life,  
When one life has been found enough for pain !”

This is, we have little doubt, a very truthful, as well as very forcible, description of her own experience as a poet; but it is far from being a true description of all poets, or at least of the whole function of any complete poet. No man, from the riches of his own life and actually experienced feelings, could have written *Lear* and *Hamlet*. Even in lyrical poetry, greater poems have been written from feelings assumed by the imagination than from real ones. Burns, more than most poets, found the sources of his poetry within his own heart; yet “Scots wha hae wi’ Wallace bled” is greater than even “Thou lingering star with lessening ray.” But Mrs. Browning has little, if any, of this power of assuming a temporary sympathy by virtue of the imagination alone; and she is still more destitute of another, closely allied to it,—the capacity of speaking from a point of view not one’s own. This capacity is the basis of dramatic power; and therefore of dramatic power Mrs. Browning has not even the rudiments. Much pure gold issues from her treasury; but she coins it all, and stamps it with her own image. Her poetry is

isolated and sedentary; not isolated in its sympathies, which are as warm and broad and tender as poet's need to be; but her voice comes as the voice of one who has always dwelt apart, and felt for men and admired nature at a distance, rather than walked familiarly in the common pathways. Hence, as she does not go down among that mass of men who read her, they must come up to her to understand. Proportioned to the absence of mobile capacity in herself is the demand she makes on that of her readers. They must assume her standing-place, and look on her work from her own point of view, if they would comprehend her meanings. Her very greatness makes this difficult; it is not all minds which can adapt themselves to her intellectual focus. Moreover, partly a want of experience, which shows in her writings, partly her own constitution, throw her back a good deal on the facts of her own inner life; and there is thus often a difficult subject-matter as well as a difficult treatment.

This want of intimacy, if we may so call it, with the outward world, is probably at the bottom of a peculiar defectiveness in the expressional matter of Mrs. Browning's poetry. We have before spoken of a discordance between the whole imaginative temper and sense of the matter; but besides this, there is often an utter want of harmony between the matter in hand and the simile under which it is represented to us: the likeness may be true enough, forcible, and cogent; but it carries with it a distracting set of associations, and makes a sudden discord, to which Mrs. Browning seems to be insensible. Our meaning will be made clear, and our criticism best justified, by quoting some of the most marked instances of this defect. In her last poem, she has the following passage to express and illustrate a poet's rendering of his age:

" Never flinch,  
But still, unscrupulously epic, catch  
Upon the burning lava of a song,  
The full-veined, heaving, double-breasted Age:  
That, when the next shall come, the men of that  
May touch the impress with reverent hand, and say  
' Behold,—behold the paps we all have sucked !'"

The contrast is almost savage. Burning lava and a woman's breast! and concentrated in the latter the fullest ideas of life. It is absolute pain to read it. No man could have written it; for, independently of its cruelty, there is a tinge in it of a sort of forward familiarity, with which Mrs. Browning sometimes, and never without uneasiness to her readers, touches upon things which the instinct of the other sex prevents them, when unbased, from approaching without reverence and tenderness.

A little further on we have some lines on which commentary

is hopeless; we only ask for their perusal, and for a deliberate consideration of the varied metaphors :

“ 'Tis true the stage requires obsequiousness  
To this or that convention; ‘exit’ here  
And ‘enter’ there; the points for clapping, fixed,  
Like Jacob’s white-peeled rods before the rams;  
And all the close-curved imagery clipped  
In manner of their fleece at shearing-time.  
Forget to prick the galleries to the heart  
Precisely at the fourth act,—culminate  
Our five pyramidal acts with one act more,—  
We’re lost so !”

When you are describing the shifty life of a degraded drunken vagrant, is it fitting to embody in this exquisite language his occasional help in driving Welsh ponies ?

“ Her father earned his life by random jobs  
Despised by steadier workmen—keeping swine  
On commons, picking hops, or hurrying on  
The harvest at wet seasons,—or, at need,  
Assisting the Welsh drovers, when a drove  
Of startled horses plunged into the mist  
Below the mountain-road, and sowed the wind  
With wandering neighings. In between the gaps  
Of such irregular work, he drank and slept,  
And cursed his wife because, the pence being out,  
She could not buy more drink.”

Sometimes the indiscriminating lavishness with which the imagery is poured forth results in the direst confusion; as in the following lines, where we are represented as shut up with wild-beasts inside a key (for it is the natural world we are shut up in), whose wards, moreover, we have filled with clay :

“ ‘ Thus it is,’  
I sighed. And he resumed with mournful face.  
‘ Beginning so, and filling up with clay  
The wards of this great key, the natural world,  
And fumbling vainly therefore at the lock  
Of the spiritual,—we feel ourselves shut in  
With all the wild-beast roar of struggling life,  
The terrors and compunctions of our souls,  
As saints with lions,—we who are not saints,  
And have no heavenly lordship in our stare  
To awe them backward !”

It is a common error of Mrs. Browning’s to carry her image just one step too far, and thus to raise it out of its proper subordination, and give it an undue importance; so that, instead of being subdued and moulded to the tone of the matter, it lifts its strong and ragged head, and insists on an independent recog-

dition. For instance, when she speaks of her father's Elzevirs, written over with his faded notes :

“—*conferenda hæc cum his—*  
*Corruptè citat—lege potiùs,*  
 And so on, in the scholar's regal way  
 Of giving judgment on the parts of speech,  
 As if he sate on all twelve thrones up-piled,  
 Arraigning Israel.”

Here the single word “regal” conveys all that is wanted with abundantly ample force and distinctness ; and the two last lines serve only to distract us, by introducing a misplaced definiteness and a set of ideas on a new scale too large for the thought.

It would be absurd, of course, to say that Mrs. Browning is destitute of an insight into or a sense of the true harmonious relations of things, for without this she could not be a poet ; and few poets surpass her in that felicitous command over the hidden and mysterious powers of words and their associations, which is of the very essence of the poet's art ; but she wants the negative sense which shrinks from a discord. Probably an intense intellectual activity has something to do with this : her mind moves in starts ; one idea occupies her for a moment ; she holds it up in the vivid light of her imagination, throws it down, and seizes another. Her intellect is too fertile in proportion to her artistic instincts ; and her thoughts and fancies bristle up over her work “like quills upon the fretful porcupine.” It is a great fault in her poetry, that it wants the fine connecting links by which parts are smoothed into a whole. Rapid and sudden transitions may, of course, often be effective and desirable ; but Mrs. Browning's poetry is apt to be broken up by a constant series of small disconnections ; her carriage has no springs ; and though the main course of the poem and the thought is consecutive, the reader is sadly-jolted by the way.

Sometimes Mrs. Browning's high-wrought metaphors give the impression of a vice which she is bound by all the indisputable greatness of her gifts not to fall into,—that of straining for effect from mere startling force of diction, instead of seeking in simplicity the truest expression,—that meretricious display of matterless large-mouthedness, for which much modern poetry is commended. Of a conscious acquiescence in this sort of untruthfulness,—for it is of the nature of untruthfulness,—no one who has read and knows the poetry of Mrs. Browning will for a moment accuse her ; but she may be fairly charged with having rather spurred on when she should have curbed her naturally daring and vehement imagination. And she loses by it ; for just as a mounted horse can always overtake an unmounted one, so power is greater and more effective when under the control of

a higher power. It leads her astray too sometimes. Real life is higher and more responsible than any art, and no gain of force in imagery can justify the least failing in religious reverence. But Mrs. Browning has accustomed herself to so stimulating a diet, that when she has exhausted all earthly elements of intensity, she is fain to resort to divine ones, and the most sacred ideas and associations are used just as material for poetry with a boldness which shocks and startles; and though we are far from saying that she writes with conscious irreverence, it is certain that she has passages which cannot be read without a shrinking sense of undue familiarity with the most awful objects to which our thoughts can aspire. It is as if she did not scruple to light her torch at that burning bush before which Moses bowed with unsandalled feet. And she not only uses things too high to give forcible embodiment to her thoughts; she pulls down the highest things, and thrusts them into her sharply-bounded decisive similes, with a freedom which we cannot designate as less than repulsive. She compares the Lord Christ, assuming our flesh, to

“ Some wise hunter creeping on his knees,  
With a torch, into the blackness of some cave,  
To face and quell the beast there.”

She tells us of the creation of man,

“ Within whose fluttering nostrils then at last,  
Consummating Himself, the Maker sighed,  
As some strong winner at the footrace sighs  
Touching the goal.”

This sort of audacity, and all Mrs. Browning's excess of high-sounding phrase and elaborate and startling metaphor, are signs of some deficiency in real strength; just as a feeble man must use a more violent effort than a strong one to attain to the same end, and as he who is timid and self-distrustful makes the greatest show of his weapons. It needs, indeed, a high class of power to wield the glittering instruments Mrs. Browning grasps with the grace and ease which she displays; but there is a higher class of power, whose might is in the simplicity of its own strength; which dares go unarmed, and unsheathes its sword only when the occasion is absolute; and whose single home-stroke is more fatal than a thousand of these intricate flourishings. “The Cry of the Children” is a poem of infinite pathos and passionate appeal; but Mrs. Browning has written as a motto to it a short direct unadorned line, whose vivid flash pales even the fine splendours of the poem which succeeds:

φεῦ, φεῦ, τί προσδέρεσθε μ' ὄμμασιν τέτρα.

We have criticised in a strict and uncompromising spirit the

defects of Mrs. Browning's workmanship, and the limitations of her genius. We have no compunction in doing so; for the least she merits is, to be tried by no debased standard. Her faults and defects are important, by reason of the value of the work from whose perfectness they detract. On the other hand, her gifts are great; so great, that England will never cease to number her in the first ranks of her poets. In abundance of ideas, in a certain fineness, vigour, and fire of intellect, she surpasses all her contemporaries. Her mind has a peculiar clearness and brilliancy, and shows the signs of much direct culture. The isolation and immobility we have indicated, narrow indeed her resources, but they shut out too all profane intrusion into the pure and lofty sphere of her own meditations. All her poetry introduces us but to one mind and one nature; but it must be a rich and spacious one which from its own treasury can bring forth matter "new and strange," profound and true, in so great a profusion. A lofty spirit shines through all her lines. Her muse has a sort of proud virgin carriage. No eyes dare gaze on her disrespectfully. Clear air hangs about her. She writes as from the unsullied ideal of a girl of fifteen, and with the same sort of freshness and intellectual eagerness. She puts aside the shortcomings of the world, half in ignorance, half in disdain; its basenesses and pettinesses lie under her unconscious feet, and her clear eyes, fixed on the morning, have no wandering glances for the lower shadows. The vice and wickedness of the world she sees; but scans it from afar, as one standing on the mountains; and the sin which comes to her with the force of reality is not that which consists in grovelling in the fens below, but in false steps and shortcomings in climbing the heights. As you read, you see (though this applies more to her early poems) that her mind has been nurtured on books rather than on things; and what she gives us of living and fresh is from the life and freshness of her own nature. Direct and brief expressions of personal feeling or conviction are best adapted to her genius. Perhaps she has written finer things than her sonnets; yet most of her readers turn oftenest to these; and they have now and then a perfect grace and harmony, unspoiled by those small jars which too often grate upon us in reading her longer poems. We will instance one which, of all, is perhaps the best known, and therefore the best for our purpose. Custom cannot stale the infinite variety of good poetry:

"When some beloved voice that was to you  
Both sound and sweetness, faileth suddenly,  
And silence, against which you dare not cry,  
Aches round you like a strong disease and new,  
What hope? what help? what music will undo  
That silence to your sense? Not friendship's sigh,

Not reason's subtle count. Not melody  
 Of viola, nor of pipes that Faunus blew ;  
 Not songs of poets, nor of nightingales,  
 Whose hearts leap upward through the cypress-trees  
 To the clear moon ! nor yet the spheric laws  
 Self-chanted,—nor the angels' sweet all-hails,  
 Met in the smile of God. Nay, none of these.  
 Speak Thou, availing Christ !—and fill this pause."

A passionate tenderness finds a voice in the Portuguese sonnets. Nay, so passionate and so tender are they, that one half shrinks from the perusal of them, and reads with some such feeling as one opens the love-letters of those long dead, and can scarcely reconcile oneself to an intrusion into the innermost secrets of another heart.

Her earlier great poems are celestial dramas. In some respects she has not improved on them. The *Drama of Exile*, looked at simply for the diction, is a far more finished poem than *Aurora Leigh*. It is briefer, simpler, completer. In its matter it is far inferior ; but a fervid imagination, without the experience which furnishes it with materials out of actual life, is very apt to seize on this sort of subject. There is a tempting boundlessness of field ; nothing cramps the play of the fancy. And Mrs. Browning's mind, especially in its younger and less experienced time, was exactly calculated to find fascination in a subject like that of "The Seraphim." It is a stimulating mental exercise to endeavour to understand how Angels look upon the universe, and feel and express themselves with reference to the mysteries of man's creation and destiny. But there must necessarily be so much of mere hypothesis and unbased fancy in these speculations ; they touch so remotely the living interests of men ; the ideas and affections they deal with are so floating and unattached,—that they can never form the subject-matter of great and permanent works of art. It is useless to attempt to conceal from ourselves that we know nothing whatever of Gabriel, Michael, or Lucifer ; and it is only by re-creating for ourselves certain more or less disproportioned human figures to which we give these names that it is possible to take any interest in them. It is the anthropomorphism and overwhelming human element in Milton's *Paradise Lost* from which it derives its power over us. Nevertheless there is a sort of poetic rejoicing in soaring in such wide and untried regions ; and Mrs. Browning's ardent, strong-winged, contemplative imagination was just the one to try its earlier flights in these bright but distant fields of air. Still with her, as with all others, it is when she touches closest on human sympathies that we lend our readiest ear, and are willing, not unwisely, to think her poetry at its best. Eminently beautiful, though not without a certain vagueness in the idea, is that chorus of Eden

spirits, whose sounds pursue Adam and Eve as they fly from Paradise:

“ Harken, O harken ! let your souls behind you  
 Turn, gently moved !  
 Our voices feel along the Dread to find you,  
 O lost, beloved !  
 Through the thick-shielded and strong-marshalled angels,  
 They press and pierce :  
 Our requiems follow fast on our evangels,—  
 Voice throbs in verse !  
 We are but orphan spirits left in Eden  
 A time ago.  
 God gave us golden cups, and we were bidden  
 To feed you so.  
 But now our right hand hath no cup remaining,  
 No work to do,  
 The mystic hydromel is spilt and staining  
 The whole earth through.  
 Most ineradicable stains for showing  
 (Not interfused !)  
 That brighter colours were the world's foregoing,  
 Than shall be used.  
 Harken, O harken ! ye shall harken surely,  
 For years and years,  
 The noise beside you, dripping coldly, purely,  
 Of spirits' tears !  
 The yearning to a beautiful denied you,  
 Shall strain your powers ;  
 Ideal sweetnesses shall over-glide you,  
 Resumed from ours !  
 In all your music, our pathetic minor  
 Your ears shall cross ;  
 And all good gifts shall mind you of diviner,  
 With sense of loss.  
 We shall be near you in your poet-languors  
 And wild extremes,  
 What time ye vex the desert with vain angers,  
 Or mock with dreamã.  
 And when upon you, weary after roaming,  
 Death's seal is put,  
 By the foregone ye shall discern the coming  
 Through eyelids shut.”

More human and more lovely in their deep yet restrained pathos are the concluding lines of the “ Song of the Morning Star to Lucifer ;” words that are like the verbal reflection of the pale shining of the planet in heaven, and afford as complete an instance as one could desire of that sort of harmony between the thing and the expression, against the frequent breach of which in *Aurora Leigh* we have protested :

“ Thine angel glory sinks  
 Down from me, down from me,—  
 My beauty falls, methinks,  
 Down from thee, down from thee !



*Aurora Leigh.*

O my light-bearer,  
 O my path-preparer,  
 Gone from me, gone from me !  
 Ah, ah, Heosphoros !

I cannot kindle underneath the brow  
 Of this new angel here, who is not Thou :  
 All things are altered, since that time ago,—  
 And if I shine at eve, I shall not know !  
 I am strange—I am slow.  
 Ah, ah, Heosphoros !

Henceforward, human eyes of lovers be  
 The only sweetest sight that I shall see,  
 With tears between the looks raised up to me.  
 Ah, ah !

When, having wept all night, at break of day,  
 Above the folded hills they shall survey  
 My light, a little trembling, in the grey.  
 Ah, ah !

And gazing on me, such shall comprehend,  
 Through all my piteous pomp at morn or even,  
 And melancholy leaning out of heaven,  
 That love, their own divine, may change or end,  
 That love may close in loss !  
 Ah, ah, Heosphoros !”

It was natural that Mrs. Browning, as her powers developed themselves, and her experiences widened, should leave this school of poetry behind her. It was natural, too, that she should desire to go beyond the more detached and simpler subject-matters of her shorter poems, and attempt the higher task of giving a shape of verse to the more complex phenomena of life and society. Her present flight is an ambitious one. If we rightly understand her, she tells us that *Aurora Leigh* is her attempt in a poem “unscrupulously epic” to “represent the age” in which she lives. She admits that to most men their own age, being too close, is as ill-discerned, as would be the lineaments of that colossal statue into which Xerxes proposed to carve Mount Athos to the peasants “gathering brushwood in his ear.” But, she says,

“ Poets should  
 Exert a double vision ; should have eyes  
 To see near things as comprehensively  
 As if afar they took their point of sight,  
 And distant things as intimately deep  
 As if they touched them.”

She tells us, that if there is any room for poets in the world, their sole work is to represent their own times. And she seems to think that in a single poem a poet can condense a sort of distillation of his age ; and this she has attempted in *Aurora Leigh*. Such, at least, is what we gather from the poem itself.

Now there is no doubt that every great poet must more or less give expression to the times in which he lives. No man can be a great poet whose power and knowledge are not derived from an insight into the actual life which surrounds him; and it is impossible that the conditions under which he has lived, and the things which he has most familiarly known, should not leave their impress upon him, and through him, upon his work. As Wordsworth's poetry is haunted by the influences of the lakes and mountains; as the nature of the Scottish peasant underlies the genius of Burns; as a self-willed worldly spirit clings to the highest flights of Byron; as Milton cannot shake off the Puritan, and even Shakespeare has some flavour of the courtier,—so it is idle to suppose every poet and every man does not carry the impress of the less close but more universal influences of the social conditions which surround him. It does not follow, however, that he is the greatest poet who most fully and most immediately reproduces these influences in the gross; still less that it is the highest effort of the poet consciously to devote himself to this task. Man is greater and more interesting than the life he lives, and it is greater to paint him simply under the conditions of his own nature than under any restricted conditions of circumstances; it is profounder and more lasting to use the special surroundings in which men exist (and without using which they cannot be painted at all) to body forth the men themselves than to attempt to reproduce an abstract whole of men and their lives as they live at a given time,—a higher task to use the age to show a man than to use men to show an age. When it was said of the greatest poet that he was of no age, it was no idle compliment; it was not meant that he wrote of things abstract and disconnected from the realities of every age; but that he pierced to those deeper realities which underlie all the ages of men, which are what the root and springing sap of the tree are to the fleeting generations of its leaves. He used the special as a body for the universal. It is true, a poet may legitimately take a lower flight than this; he may choose to embody the leading ideas and characteristics of the period of time in which he lives; and this, no doubt, is a higher artistic effort than to attempt to embody those of any other particular age,—if for no other reason, because he is dealing with things more real, more familiar, and in all probability of a deeper interest. It does not follow, however, even if this be his direct object, that his events and his characters must be chosen from those which immediately surround him. He may select in the past, or invent for himself, the framework of his poem of modern ideas; or he may deal with the ideas of the past for the sake of some bearing they have, either by contrast or analogy, on the ideas of the present. Kingsley's *Saint's Tra-*

*gedy*, and Tennyson's *Princess*, are cases in point. Mrs. Browning, however, holds,—and the idea is a common one at the present day,—that it is higher effort to represent modern ideas in their actual modern dress. Perhaps it is. Certainly it is a much more difficult one. Perhaps the poet ought to be able to see his own times at the same moment with the eyes of one removed from them and one near to them; but we know no poet who has ever done so. It is obvious enough to cite Homer; but even granting that “Wolff’s an atheist,” it is not easy to believe that “the tale of Troy divine” was written in the actual times it deals with. The Homeric poems give us our knowledge of the Homeric age; but whether they are a true description of the times of Achilles, or a story cast in those times, and an incidentally true delineation of the manners and thoughts of a later time in which they were written, is, to say the least of it, an open question. Even the satirist paints his times, not as they are, but in their relation to a special preconceived idea of his own. No doubt it is easy to clothe some of the simpler elements of the present life in the dress of the time; but the deeper and more searching knowledge of a poet of the great and fundamental characteristics of the life which surrounds him, the more difficult and intricate a task does it become to reproduce these things in their actual context with the thousand crossing and entangled details through which he has pierced to and gathered up their real significance. His instinct,—and we think it is a true one,—is, to take what he has gained quite away from these complications; and crystallize it in some new form, in which it may shine in fuller clearness and simplicity.

However this may be, Mrs. Browning has undertaken to build a poem purely from modern materials. She has produced a work which, in completeness of form and artistic execution, falls far short of many of her previous efforts; but which in matter far surpasses the best of them. A wider experience, a profounder philosophy, a more real and human knowledge, attempt to find a voice in language more removed than that of any of her other poems from the adequacy of genuine simplicity, and are couched in a semi-dramatic form, which is one the author’s genius least qualifies her to deal successfully with. As is natural, nay, inevitable, from the conformation of Mrs. Browning’s mind, her poem deals primarily with ideas of her own: and all the narrative and dramatic elements in the book are but the constituent materials in the erection of an edifice of thought. We cannot help thinking, that where this is the case, care should be taken that these elements should preserve the same secondary place in the poem that they do in the matter. Mrs. Browning has unfortunately given a most undue prominence to the least valuable

and most defective part of her work. Unpossessed, as we have before said, of that pliancy and mobility of mind which qualifies a poet to deal with details of external life, she selects a poem to which such details are indispensable, and even then overlays her matter with a mass of them totally unnecessary. Minuteness of incident receives the utmost redundancy of expression; and the real thread of her meaning runs through the whole like a golden wire strung thick with beads, and obscured from all but special research. Perhaps one reader in a thousand can master Mrs. Browning's poem at a single reading; though, indeed, some parts of it are so contrived as that it shall be impossible to understand them on a first perusal (as in that behaviour and those allusions of Romney, in his interview with Aurora, which result from his blindness, of which we are ignorant). The poem is worth reading once, twice, thrice, oftener, till you do understand the full force and significance of all it contains: but it is a long poem, a very long poem; and we fear Mrs. Browning would not be pleased with a statistical return of those who have received from it only confused impressions and a brief excitement of the imagination and feelings. It would have been a greater, a simpler, a truer, and a more valuable poem, if it had been compressed within one-fourth of its present limits. Nor is its author unwise only in her excess of detail and exuberance of secondary matter. It was necessary that she should deal with human beings; but it was not necessary that she should display them by dramatic forms, and so conduct her story as to lay bare the most prominent defect of her poetic genius in its most undisguised nakedness.

There are many persons in the poem who are made to express themselves in the first person; but characters, except in brief description, there are none,—nothing but vague hazy embodiments given to certain contrasted sets of ideas. They do not deceive us for an instant. We never think of them as individuals who have, or ever have had, life, as we do of Agamemnon, or Hamlet, or Cuddie Headrigg; we see them at once to be only some other person's notion of a person;—phantoms which may have had flesh-and-blood antecedents, but now walk only in books, and whose vaporous unsubstantial forms betray them to be but reveries of the poet, simulating speech and motion. Aurora Leigh, the poetess, tells her own story; and yet even with her you never feel that you know her personally, or have pierced beyond one or two of the marked and prominent characteristics of her nature. You are conscious that she is but the representative of the real poet behind; and that she comes forward only to give a voice to the inner convictions, the intellectual questionings and problems, and the heart's solutions of the artist who employs her. The poetess, the philanthropist, the woman of fashion, and

the vagrant child, all express themselves in exactly the same language, use the same tropes, the same recondite imagery, and are on the same high level of intellectual cultivation and vigorous thought. The child of brutal parents, kept pure by the instincts of her own nature, but owing her only intellectual discipline to stray half-torn volumes, picked up from wandering pedlars, does not scruple to talk of "madrepores," and invariably employs more recondite forms of expression than would be used by one woman in a hundred of the educated classes of England.

The characters were meant to be distinct, nay, were no doubt conceived as distinct; but in passing through the author's mind, they have retained so much of her, and lost so much of what is distinctive, that they seem only like shadows of herself in various attitudes and different lights. In actually describing what she has seen, however, whether in nature or in human character, Mrs. Browning is often very successful. Lord Howe is well touched :

"Let me draw Lord Howe;

A born aristocrat, bred radical,  
 And educated socialist, who still  
 Goes floating, on traditions of his kind,  
 Across the theoretic flood from France,—  
 Though, like a drenched Noah on a rotten deck,  
 Scarce safer for his place there. He, at least,  
 Will never land on Ararat, he knows,  
 To recommence the world on the old plan :  
 Indeed, he thinks, said world had better end :  
 He sympathises rather with the fish  
 Outside, than with the drowned paired beasts within  
 Who cannot couple again or multiply :  
 And that's the sort of Noah he is, Lord Howe.  
 He never could be any thing complete,  
 Except a loyal, upright gentleman,  
 A liberal landlord, graceful diner-out,  
 And entertainer more than hospitable,  
 Whom authors dine with and forget the port.  
 Whatever he believes, and it is much,  
 But no-wise certain . . . now here and now there, . . .  
 He still has sympathies beyond his creed,  
 Diverting him from action. In the House,  
 No party counts upon him, and all praise  
 All like his books too, (he has written books)  
 Which, good to lie beside a bishop's chair,  
 So oft outreach themselves with jets of fire  
 At which the foremost of the progressists  
 May warm audacious hands in passing by,  
 —Of stature over-tall, lounging for ease ;  
 Light hair, that seems to carry a wind in it,  
 And eyes that, when they look on you, will lean  
 Their whole weight half in indolence, and half  
 In wishing you unmitigated good,  
 Until you know not if to flinch from him  
 Or thank him.—'Tis Lord Howe."

Marian, too, the daughter of the people, is admirably described,—rather, we should say, admirably conceived; and the fine and most truthful and delicate conception glimmers through the brief description. But, unfortunately, Mrs. Browning will not rely on description; and when Marian comes to speak for herself we are utterly thrown out, and a nondescript confused image of a somewhat affected young woman, of vast powers of poetical expression, usurps the place of that true idea we in vain attempt to hold steadily before us. Thus she paints the personal appearance of Marian:

“ No wise beautiful  
Was Marian Erle. She was not white nor brown,  
But could look either, like a mist that changed  
According to being shone on more or less.  
The hair, too, ran its opulence of curls  
In doubt 'twixt dark and bright, nor left you clear  
To name the colour. Too much hair perhaps  
(I'll name a fault here) for so small a head,  
Which seemed to droop on that side and on this,  
As a full-blown rose uneasy with its weight,  
Though not a breath should trouble it. Again,  
The dimple in the cheek had better gone  
With redder, fuller rounds: and somewhat large  
The mouth was, though the milky little teeth  
Dissolved it to so infantine a smile!  
For soon it smiled at me; the eyes smiled too,  
But 'twas as if remembering they had wept,  
And knowing they should, some day, weep again.”

It seems strange, that one who can both observe and describe so accurately, should stand always at arm's length from other minds, and should be powerless to paint people as they appear to themselves, or to make them paint themselves as they appear to others. The only trace of dramatic power occurs now and then in some brief flash, which is, indeed, only the shining of a spark of accurate observation, and makes the surrounding dimness more noticeable; as when, in Marian's letter, she says:

“ I'm poor at writing at the best,—and yet  
I tried to make my *gs* the way you showed.”

Aurora Leigh is the daughter of an English gentleman and an Italian mother, born in Italy, early orphaned, and brought back to be educated in England by a maiden-aunt. Under all the repressions and exactions of a young lady's education more recondite than we have elsewhere heard of, she leads an inner life of her own, familiar with nature and the books of her dead father's collecting; and at the age of twenty years, walking in the dewy garden on the morning of her birthday, she crowns herself with an ivy-wreath—a poet by anticipation. Mrs. Brown-

ing describes the child let loose in the world of books in some lines replete with that wealth of thought, and that rich and vivid imagination, which, with all its shortcomings and sins against true keeping, make *Aurora Leigh* a great poem. But our space for quotation is limited, and we turn rather to those lovely verses in which she describes the young poetic girl rejoicing in the external beauty around her :

“ I flattered all the beauteous country round,  
As poets use . . the skies, the clouds, the fields,  
The happy violets hiding from the roads  
The primroses run down to, carrying gold,—  
The tangled hedgerows, where the cows push out  
Impatient horns and tolerant churning mouths  
"Twixt dripping ash-boughs,—hedgerows all alive  
With birds and gnats and large white butterflies  
Which look as if the May-flower had caught life  
And palpitated forth upon the wind,—  
Hills, vales, woods, netted in a silver mist,  
Farms, granges, doubled up among the hills,  
And cattle grazing in the watered vales,  
And cottage-chimneys smoking from the woods,  
And cottage-gardens smelling every where,  
Confused with smell of orchards. ‘See,’ I said,  
‘And see! is God not with us on the earth?  
And shall we put Him down by aught we do?  
Who says there’s nothing for the poor and vile  
Save poverty and wickedness? behold!’  
And ankle-deep in English grass I leaped,  
And clapped my hands, and called all very fair.”

Standing with her ivy-wreath on her head, and her arms raised to bind it on, she is startled by her cousin Romney Leigh. Romney is a philanthropist, as she is a poet. The physical distress and pain of the universe, the misery of his fellow-men, have weighed so deeply on his spirit, that, in the violence of a sort of despair, he has dedicated his whole life and being to the effort of lightening their toil, and satisfying at least the cravings of the ill-fed multitude for the supply of their bodily wants. He comes to ask her to be his wife. He has found a volume of her poems. He warns her against playing with art, which he assumes is all a woman can do, and bids her choose the nobler work, to seek some cure for the social strait; he asks her to help him with love and fellowship through bitter duties. She turns on him sharply enough with the retort, that she who, he says, is not competent to stand alone, or to sing even like a blackbird, can never be competent to uphold him and to love. “Any thing does for a wife,” she tells him. And when he replies, that though her sex is weak in art, it is strong for life and duty, and still urges their common task, she retorts upon him, that he loves a cause and not a woman, and wants not a mistress but a helpmate,—to bear about

with him a wife, a sister, like the apostle. Like a man, she says, he talks of woman as only the complement of his own sex; but

“ That every creature, female as the male,  
Stands single in responsible act and thought,  
As also in birth and death.”

That the work proposed must be not only *his* best, but *her* best work, the best she was ordained to, before she can love and work with him. That she too has her vocation; and though the world were twice as wretched, no less necessary work than his, nay, more so; for that his best success would be but failure, if man,—all his physical wants supplied, and the best socialistic union and plenty prevailing,—should not have the poet to keep open the pathways to and from the unseen world which surrounds them. Nay, she tells him he cannot attain his own poor limits of material ease without the poet's aid :

“ It takes a sail  
To move a body ; it takes a high-souled man  
To move the masses, even to a clearer stage ;  
It takes the ideal to blow a hair's breadth off  
The dust of the actual. Ah, your Fouriers failed,  
Because not poets enough to understand  
That life develops from within.”

For herself, she says, perhaps she is not worthy of work like this, perhaps a woman's soul aspires and not creates; yet she will try out these perhapses, and, at any rate, will love her art, and not wish it lower to suit her own stature. So they part; yet a shadow passes over her, as if it were hard to refuse even the mere potentiality of love. But when her somewhat grim and straightlaced aunt declares she loves Romney, in spite of her refusal, she indignantly repudiates the charge, and is naturally confirmed in her feelings by finding that Romney had motives of generosity for marrying her, and might possibly, therefore, not be prompted by love alone, or even, if so, might oppress her with too resistless an obligation. Aurora's aunt dies, and she and Romney go out on their several paths into the world. After years, and at the end of the book, they meet again in Italy. She is somewhat worn with her work, supporting herself with one hand, and labouring for her art with the other. She has tasted the emptiness of reputation, the disgusts of shallow applause and false criticism, the painful sense of her own shortcomings. She has bent the whole force of her energy and life to one great task, and accomplished it; but still her ideal lies unreached before her. She thinks the artist may be childless like the man; and when she gathers fame, though it be the love of all, her woman's heart is troubled with the absence of the love of one. Thus wearied, she goes to her native Italy to rest. Romney's failure has been



more complete. A Lady Waldemar,—drawn in colours more coarse and repulsive than there seems occasion for, and whose character seems to be somewhat sacrificed to Mrs. Browning's taste for high-pressure writing,—falls in love with him. He, on the other hand, has resolved to marry the Marian of whom we have spoken, with the view of establishing a sort of matrimonial suspension-bridge over the gulf which separates English classes. Lady Waldemar spirits Marian away on the very wedding-day, and she is decoyed into some den of infamy in France, where she falls a victim to violence. All Romney's schemes for the reconstruction of the world fail. He turns Leigh Hall into a phalanstery, and brings all the country about his ears. The very wretches he had brought in "cursed him for his tyrannous constraint, in forcing crooked creatures to live straight;" and they and the scandalised peasantry unite together and burn the Hall down, Romney himself losing his eyesight by the malice of one whom he was saving. In France, Aurora has found Marian; and has taken her and her boy, the offspring of her misery, with her to Italy. Thither comes Romney too, who has learned her miserable history, to redeem his old obligations, and make her his wife. He finds Aurora; and has a long conversation with her, in which they confess and compare their several failures and shortcomings. Their colloquy is full of noble poetry; and wants but compression, and the greater closeness, strength, and simplicity, which compression gives, to make it entirely worthy of the great powers of the author. The blind Romney, whose aspiring reconstructive schemes God has defeated, and put himself aside like a broken tool, confesses the truth of the words Aurora had spoken on that June-day which parted their youth. He sees now that his ends were too low, that his despair of the world, and his harassing desire to reconstruct it, as if he alone could do it and were needful to success, betrayed a want of faith, and merited the lesson of humility he had received. He speaks with bitter scorn of his presumptuous endeavour

"to stand and claim to have a life  
 Beyond the bounds of the individual man,  
 And raze all personal cloisters of the soul  
 To build up public stores and magazines,  
 As if God's creatures otherwise were lost,  
 The builder surely saved by any means!  
 To think,—I have a pattern on my nail,  
 And I will carve the world new after it,  
 And solve so, these hard social questions,—nay,  
 Impossible social questions,—since their roots  
 Strike deep in Evil's own existence here,  
 Which God permits because the question's hard  
 To abolish evil nor attain free-will.  
 Ay, hard to God, but not to Romney Leigh!

For Romney has a pattern on his nail,  
(Whatever may be lacking on the Mount)  
And not being overnice to separate  
What's element from what's convention, hastes  
By line on line, to draw you out a world,  
Without your help indeed, unless you take  
His yoke upon you and will learn of him,—  
So much he has to teach ; so good a world !  
The same the whole creation's groaning for !  
No rich nor poor, no gain nor loss nor stint,  
No potage in it able to exclude  
A brother's birthright, and no right of birth,  
The potage,—both secured to every man ;  
And perfect virtue dealt out like the rest,  
Gratuitously, with the soup at six,  
To whoso does not seek it."

And it needs Aurora to remind him that

"If he strained too wide,  
It was not to take honour, but give help ;  
The gesture was heroic. If his hand  
Accomplished nothing . . (well, it is not proved)  
That empty hand thrown impotently out  
Were sooner caught, I think, by One in heaven,  
Than many a hand that reaped a harvest in  
And keeps the scythe's glow on it."

She too confesses,

"We both were wrong that June-day,—both as wrong  
As an east wind had been. I who talked of art,  
And you who grieved for all men's griefs . . what then ?  
We surely made too small a part for God  
In these things. What we are, imports us more  
Than what we eat ; and life, you've granted me,  
Develops from within. But innermost  
Of the inmost, most interior of the interne,  
God claims his own, Divine humanity  
Renewing nature,—or the piercingest verse,  
Prest in by subtlest poet, still must keep  
As much upon the outside of a man,  
As the very bowl in which he dips his beard.  
—And then, . . the rest. I cannot surely speak.  
Perhaps I doubt more than you doubted then,  
If I, the poet's veritable charge,  
Have borne upon my forehead. If I have,  
It might feel somewhat liker to a crown,  
The foolish green one even.—Ah, I think,  
And chiefly when the sun shines, that I've failed.  
But what then, Romney ? Though we fail indeed,  
You . . I . . a score of such weak workers, . . He  
Fails never. If He cannot work by us,  
He will work over us. Does He want a man,  
Much less a woman, think you ? Every time  
The star winks there, so many souls are born,  
Who all shall work too. Let our own be calm :  
We should be ashamed to sit beneath those stars,  
Impatient that we're nothing."

Aurora has supposed Romney married to Lady Waldemar; and as he amazingly vindicates himself from the charge, as involving an incredible degradation, and reminds her of the claim that Marian Erle has on him, she herself appears between them, and the poem deepens to the pathos of her renunciation of him; for her love for him (if it was not always worship rather than love) is lost in her passion for her child; and thence the strain rebounds and scales the highest heaven of joy as the secret of Aurora's heart is wrung from her by the sudden knowledge of Romney's blindness, and her passionate and capacious nature finds in his love its full contentment. The barriers of her pride fall away, and she learns the error of her life,—that she had striven to be an artist instead of a woman, rather than been content to be a simple woman, and let her art spring from that true basis; and the truth, which is the deepest moral of the work, overwhelms her with its sudden conviction, that great as is art, greater is the human life of the artist; and greatest, love, which is the centre of that life and of all life—

“ Art symbolises heaven, but Love is God  
And makes heaven.”

As the theme deepens, and the faulty artist forgets herself in the true poet, the verse runs smooth and clear; the startling, jarring metaphors are subdued to the element in which they move, and the verse is no unfit medium for the lofty matter. Our brief argument of the poem is not for the purpose of conveying any adequate idea of its varied contents; but only preserves the sequence of incident and follows the main clue of thought sufficiently to enable us to quote some of the later passages, which give the best idea of the best parts of the work :

“ ‘ Ah!—not married.’

‘ You mistake,’ he said;

‘ I’m married. Is not Marian Erle my wife?  
As God sees things, I have a wife and child;  
And I, as I’m a man who honours God,  
Am here to claim them as my child and wife.’

I felt it hard to breathe, much less to speak.  
Nor word of mine was needed. Some one else  
Was there for answering. ‘ Romney,’ she began,  
‘ My great good angel, Romney.’

Then at first,

I knew that Marian Erle was beautiful.  
She stood there, still and pallid as a saint,  
Dilated like a saint in ecstasy,  
As if the floating moonshine interposed  
Betwixt her foot and the earth, and raised her up  
To float upon it. ‘ I had left my child,

Who sleeps,' she said, 'and, having drawn this way,  
I heard you speaking, . . friend!—Confirm me now.  
You take this Marian, such as wicked men  
Have made her, for your honourable wife?'

The thrilling, solemn, proud, pathetic voice.  
He stretched his arms out toward the thrilling voice,  
As if to draw it on to his embrace.  
—'I take her as God made her, and as men  
Must fail to unmake her, for my honoured wife.'

She never raised her eyes, nor took a step,  
But stood there in her place, and spoke again.  
—'You take this Marian's child, which is her shame  
In sight of men and women, for your child,  
Of whom you will not ever feel ashamed?'

The thrilling, tender, proud, pathetic voice.  
He stepped on toward it, still with outstretched arms,  
As if to quench upon his breast that voice.  
—'May God so father me, as I do him,  
And so forsake me as I let him feel  
He's orphaned haply. Here I take the child  
To share my cup, to slumber on my knee,  
To play his loudest gambol at my foot,  
To hold my finger in the public ways,  
Till none shall need inquire, 'Whose child is this,'  
The gesture saying so tenderly, 'My own.'"

She appeals to Aurora; and she too gives her verdict:

"That Romney Leigh is honoured in his choice,  
Who choseth Marian for his honoured wife."

"Her broad wild woodland eyes shot out a light;  
Her smile was wonderful for rapture. 'Thanks,  
My great Aurora.' Forward then she sprang,  
And dropping her impassioned spaniel head  
With all its brown abandonment of curls  
On Romney's feet, we heard the kisses drawn  
Through sobs upon the foot, upon the ground—  
'O Romney! O my angel! O unchanged  
Though, since we've parted, I have past the grave!  
But Death itself could only better *thee*,  
Not change thee!—*Thee* I do not thank at all:  
I but thank God who made thee what thou art,  
So wholly godlike.'

When he tried in vain  
To raise her to his embrace, escaping thence  
As any leaping fawn from a huntsman's grasp,  
She bounded off and 'lighted beyond reach,  
Before him, with a staglike majesty  
Of soft, serene defiance,—as she knew  
He could not touch her, so was tolerant  
He had cared to try. She stood there with her great  
Drowned eyes, and dripping cheeks, and strange sweet smile  
That lived through all, as if one held a light

Across a waste of waters,—shook her head  
 To keep some thoughts down deeper in her soul,—  
 Then, white and tranquil as a summer-cloud  
 Which, having rained itself to a tardy peace,  
 Stands still in heaven as if it ruled the day,  
 Spoke out again.”

She renounces him on the grounds we have indicated; and we move on to where, after learning Romney's never-failing love and the greatness of his calamity, the floodgates of Aurora's passion are broken down :

“ No matter : let the truth  
 Stand high ; Aurora must be humble : no,  
 My love's not pity merely. Obviously  
 I'm not a generous woman, never was,  
 Or else, of old, I had not looked so near  
 To weights and measures, grudging you the power  
 To give, as first I scorned your power to judge  
 For me, Aurora : I would have no gifts  
 Forsooth, but God's—and I would use *them*, too,  
 According to my pleasure and my choice,  
 As he and I were equals,—you, below,  
 Excluded from that level of interchange  
 Admitting benefaction. You were wrong  
 In much? you said so. I was wrong in most.  
 Oh, most! You only thought to rescue men  
 By half-means, half-way, seeing half their wants,  
 While thinking nothing of your personal gain.  
 But I who saw the human nature broad,  
 At both sides, comprehending, too, the soul's,  
 And all the high necessities of Art,  
 Betrayed the thing I saw, and wronged my own life  
 For which I pleaded. Passioned to exalt  
 The artist's instinct in me at the cost  
 Of putting down the woman's,—I forgot  
 No perfect artist is developed here  
 From any imperfect woman. Flower from root,  
 And spiritual from natural, grade by grade  
 In all our life. A handful of the earth  
 To make God's image! the despised poor earth,  
 The healthy odorous earth,—I missed, with it,  
 The divine breath that blows the nostrils out  
 To ineffable *infatus* : ay, the breath  
 Which love is. Art is much, but love is more.  
 O Art, my Art, thou'rt much, but Love is more!  
 Art symbolises heaven, but Love is God  
 And makes heaven. I, Aurora, fell from mine:  
 I would not be a woman like the rest,  
 A simple woman who believes in love,  
 And owns the right of love because she loves,  
 And, hearing she's beloved, is satisfied  
 With what contents God : I must analyse,  
 Confront, and question ; just as if a fly  
 Refused to warm itself in any sun  
 Till such was *in leone* : I must fret  
 Forsooth, because the month was only May ;

Be faithless of the kind of proffered love,  
 And captious, lest it miss my dignity,  
 And scornful, that my lover sought a wife  
 To use . . . to use! O Romney, O my love,  
 I am changed since then, changed wholly,—for indeed,  
 If now you'd stoop so low to take my love,  
 And use it roughly, without stint or spare,  
 As men use common things with more behind,  
 (And, in this, ever would be more behind)  
 To any mean and ordinary end,—  
 The joy would set me like a star, in heaven,  
 So high up, I should shine because of height  
 And not of virtue. Yet in one respect,  
 Just one, beloved, I am in nowise changed:  
 I love you, loved you . . . loved you first and last,  
 And love you on for ever. Now I know  
 I loved you always, Romney. She who died  
 Knew that, and said so; Lady Waldemar  
 Knows that; . . . and Marian: I had known the same  
 Except that I was prouder than I knew,  
 And not so honest. Ay, and, as I live  
 I should have died so, crushing in my hand  
 This rose of love, the wasp inside and all,—  
 Ignoring ever to my soul and you  
 Both rose and pain,—except for this great loss,  
 This great despair,—to stand before your face  
 And know I cannot win a look of yours.  
 You think, perhaps, I am not changed from pride,  
 And that I chiefly bear to say such words,  
 Because you cannot shame me with your eyes?  
 O calm, grand eyes, extinguished in a storm,  
 Blown out like lights o'er melancholy seas,  
 Though shrieked for by the shipwrecked,—O my Dark,  
 My Cloud,—to go before me every day  
 While I go ever toward the wilderness,—  
 I would that you could see me bare to the soul!—  
 If this be pity, 'tis so for myself,  
 And not for Romney: *he* can stand alone;  
 A man like *him* is never overcome:  
 No woman like me, counts him pitiable  
 While saints applaud him. He mistook the world:  
 But I mistook my own heart,—and that slip  
 Was fatal. Romney,—will you leave me here?  
 So wrong, so proud, so weak, so unconsolated,  
 So mere a woman!—and I love you so,—  
 I love you, Romney.'

Could I see his face,  
 I wept so? Did I drop against his breast,  
 Or did his arms constrain me? Were my cheeks  
 Hot, overflowed, with my tears, or his?  
 And which of our two large explosive hearts  
 So shook me? That, I know not. There were words  
 That broke in utterance . . . melted, in the fire;  
 Embrace, that was convulsion, . . . then a kiss . . .  
 As long and silent as the ecstatic night,—  
 And deep, deep, shuddering breaths, which meant beyond  
 Whatever could be told by word or kiss."

She learns how he had ever loved her, since he,

“ A boy still, had been told the tale  
Of how a fairy-bride from Italy,  
With smells of oleanders in her hair,  
Was coming through the vines to touch his hand;”

and how the very strength of his devotion, and the greatness of his worship, had made him feel, too, that she must be made part of his “dedication to the human need,” and “prove he kept back nothing, not his soul.” And again the tide of joy rolls up, and gives a fuller voice than any other poet has ever done to the intensity of love’s rapture in a woman’s heart :

“ But oh, the night ! oh, bitter-sweet ! oh, sweet !  
O dark, O moon and stars, O ecstasy  
Of darkness ! O great mystery of love,—  
In which absorbed, loss, anguish, treason’s self  
Enlarges rapture,—as a pebble dropt  
In some full wine-cup, over-brims the wine !  
While we two sate together, leaned that night  
So close, my very garments crept and thrilled  
With strange electric life ; and both my cheeks  
Grew red, then pale, with touches from my hair  
In which his breath was ; while the golden moon  
Was hung before our faces as the badge  
Of some sublime inherited despair,  
Since ever to be seen by only one,—  
A voice said, low and rapid as a sigh,  
Yet breaking, I felt conscious, from a smile,—  
‘ Thank God, who made me blind, to make me see !  
Shine on, Aurora, dearest light of souls,  
Which rul’st for evermore both day and night !  
I am happy.’

I flung closer to his breast,  
As sword that, after battle, flings to sheath ;  
And, in that hurtle of united souls,  
The mystic motions which in common moods  
Are shut beyond our sense, broke in on us,  
And, as we sate, we felt the old earth spin,  
And all the starry turbulence of worlds  
Swing round us in their audient circles, till  
If that some golden moon were overhead  
Or if beneath our feet, we did not know.”

He accepts the limits that have been assigned him through his calamity, and bids the artist assume her true functions, nor cease from her labour on the earth ; and together they turn their faces to the East, to await God’s great coming day of final restoration.

A noble poem, and every where throughout it the poet shows greater than her work. Indeed, given a poem of certain excellence, and the degree in which it shows defectiveness in the interpretive faculty (in which we have described Mrs. Browning

as wanting) is but a measure of the higher order of personal qualities necessarily present in the poet; who by that very defectiveness is thrown back more than another on the resources of his own mind and nature. Mrs. Browning is conscientiously devoted to her art; it is no by-work to her, but the deliberately undertaken business of her life. There is no reason why she should not gain a much higher degree of artistic unity and simplicity than she now possesses. The fountains of her genius show an unflinching freshness and force; and high as *Aurora Leigh* stands, its author may live to look back on it as only a stepping-stone to the highest things of which she is capable.

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ART. II.—SECONDARY PUNISHMENTS.

*First, Second, and Third Reports from the Select Committee on Transportation; together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix. Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be printed, 27th May 1856, 20th June 1856, and 11th July 1856.*

*Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, appointed to inquire into the Provisions and Operation of the Act 16 and 17 Vict. cap. 99, intituled "An Act to substitute in certain cases other Punishment in lieu of Transportation;" and to report thereon to the House; together with the Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, and Index. Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be printed, 25th July 1856.*

*Report from the Select Committee on Transportation; together with the Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, and Index. Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be printed, 3d August 1838.*

*England and Wales: Tables showing the Number of Criminal Offenders committed for trial, or bailed for appearance at the Assizes and Sessions in each County, in the year 1855, and the Results of the Proceedings. Presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of her Majesty.*

*The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell's Administration. By Earl Grey. 2 vols. London: Bentley, 1853.*

*The London Prisons: to which is added, a Description of the chief Provincial Prisons. By Hepworth Dixon. London: Jackson and Walford, 1850.*

*John Howard, and the Prison World of Europe. From Original and Authentic Documents. By Hepworth Dixon. Second Edition. London: Jackson and Walford, 1850.*



*Chapters on Prisons and Prisoners, and the Prevention of Crime.*  
By Joseph Kingsmill, M.A., Chaplain of Pentonville Prison, London.  
Third Edition. London: Longman and Co., 1854.

*On the Present Aspect of Serious Crime in England, and the Means used for its Punishment and Repression by Government.* By the Rev. Joseph Kingsmill, M.A. London: Longman and Co.

*Revelations of Prison Life; with an Inquiry into Prison Discipline and Secondary Punishments.* By George Laval Chesterton, Twenty-five years Governor of the House of Correction at Cold-bath Fields. 2 vols. Second Edition, revised. London: Hurst and Blackett, 1856.

*A Tract on Tickets of Leave.* By C. B. Adderley, M.P. London: J. W. Parker and Son, 1857.

*What is to be done with our Criminals? A Letter to the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor,* by Charles Pearson, Esq., City Solicitor. Together with Mr. Pearson's Speech on the same Subject in the House of Commons, May 15th, 1849. London: Arthur Hall and Virtue, 1857.

PUBLIC attention is at length fairly roused to the necessity of revising our code and administration of Secondary Punishments. We should rejoice at this new-born interest in a most important question, if we did not fear that it was evanescent, the effect of a passing panic, and likely to decline as that gradually dies away. In the majority of recent discussions on this subject, large considerations of policy are altogether ignored; or are alluded to only to be contemptuously dismissed as the harmless amusement of a few speculative recluses and *doctrinaire* reformers. To stave-off the evil during our day and generation, and to leave to the morrow the things of the morrow, is proclaimed as the true wisdom of practical men. The greatest of social problems is viewed through the distorting medium of merely personal apprehensions. All attempts calmly to ascertain the facts of the case are denounced as efforts to bewilder the common sense of the country. "We know," it is said, "that life and property are daily less secure; and we are not to be imposed on by statistics. This is no time for fine theories. Offenders must be dealt with in a summary manner. Banishment is our only resource." If conscience can "make cowards of us all," cowardice seems to have the power of retaliating by paralysing conscience. With the subsidence of the present panic, which even now shows symptoms of decline, these counsels born of it will cease. We shall be glad if they make way for any thing more worthy than the old indifference.

In the mean time, we are far from thinking that this alarm

has been altogether groundless. But we believe that it has been much exaggerated. A *cacoëthes scribendi* seized on our respectable citizens. A man whose house had been attempted, or whose person subjected to the gentle embrace of the garotter, became forthwith a distinguished character, and "felt it a duty" to write to the *Times*. In this way many cases which ordinarily would have been passed over in silence, were elaborately paraded before the public. Outrages which, in a less excited state of popular feeling, would have been consigned to the obscurity of the police-reports, were dwelt on in terrified leading-articles. Desperate men announced the warlike preparations which they had made in their domestic establishments,—so that every Englishman's house seemed, in a new sense, to have become his castle; and proclaimed their intention of committing murder, *pro aris et focis*, on the first opportunity. Others, of a more scientific turn, described wonderful machines of their own device, which appeared to rival the art of Vulcan, and to surpass the sagacity and moral discrimination of a Bow-street officer. They were warranted by their enthusiastic authors to catch and hold fast every burglar, or other feloniously disposed person; while they would in no case interfere with visitors of friendly intentions.

But while the popular apprehensions were, in our opinion, largely factitious, they were, it is probable, not wholly so. To what extent they were well-founded, a reference to the Criminal Tables may help us to determine. We do not rely too implicitly on these documents. The number of *persons* committed is not an infallible index to the number of *crimes* committed. The popular impressions and the official returns must be allowed each to qualify the conclusions we should draw from either alone; though, of course, the definite statements of the one carry with them more authority than the vague alarms of the other, which are like the spirit that passed before the face of Eliphaz, and caused his hair to stand on end,—the more terrible that no man can "discern the form" thereof.

In 1854 the number of committals was 29,359; while in 1855 it was 25,972, showing a decrease of 11·5 per cent in the latter year.\* But cases of malicious stabbing and wounding had increased 88 per cent, and manslaughter 14 per cent. While the aggregate of violent offences against property had diminished,

\* The returns for 1855 require a twofold correction to make comparison of them with former years equitable, owing to the operation of the Criminal Justice Act (which received the royal assent in August 1855), and the extension of the Winter Assize Act to twenty other counties besides York and Lancaster. We must add 522 to the number of commitments in 1855, making a total of 26,494,—still a large reduction on the preceding twelve months. (See Criminal Tables for 1855, p. iii.)

there was an increase of robberies and burglaries, both to the amount of 7·7 per cent. Sir George Grey tells us that serious offences in 1856 (for which the returns are not yet published) show a decrease of 25 per cent on the previous year. "Burglary and other violent offences," he adds, "are comprised in this general aggregate; and it is also worthy of note, that the crime of robbery, including as it does garotting, which is only one of the various modes resorted to for effecting robbery, has slightly decreased in 1856 as compared with 1855."\* But this statement is too loose to bear much stress. To say that serious offences have diminished, and burglaries are serious offences, is not to say that burglaries have diminished. The decrease of robberies in general, is compatible with an increase of robbery by garotting; and moreover, this decrease in 1856 is only upon a considerable increase in 1855. Nothing is said of violent offences against the person, which are almost universally believed to have been perpetrated in great excess during the last twelve months. Such a belief can hardly have been *altogether* a mistake. There must have been *some* substance to throw so great a shadow. This opinion is not out of harmony with the conclusion, that during the last half-century crimes of violence have on the whole steadily diminished; since it will be allowed that special causes may temporarily counteract a general tendency, as in the ebbing tide, while the great mass of waters retires, a wave may here and there advance beyond the line from which all the while the sea is receding. That such incidental causes have been in operation lately, a very little reflection will make probable. The reduction of our regular forces, which, during the war, had to be recruited from a class inferior to that from which they are ordinarily supplied; the recall of those regiments of the militia which had volunteered for stations abroad; and the disbanding, together with them, of such as had remained on home-service, and of the foreign legions,—must be taken into account. There is no unfairness in attributing to the worst of the men, thus let loose upon society, in many cases without employment, an appreciable share of the outrages which, in the absence of any thing like proof, have been set down to the ticket-of-leave men.

In the mean time, be the popular feeling extravagant or not, the Government, urged on by it, or wisely taking advantage of it, has produced its plans. Before proceeding to consider them in detail, it may not be without use to review the main features of previous systems of secondary punishment and convict discipline. In order wisely to "look before," it is necessary carefully to "look after." The probabilities of the future can only be estimated from the certainties of the past.

\* Speech in the House of Commons, Feb. 9th, 1857. *Times Report.*

The recognition of the importance of the several questions relative to the treatment of crime is of comparatively recent date. With a qualification afterwards to be made, it may be said to have been brought about by the exertions of Howard to purify our prisons. The squalid filth of the common gaols in his day made them scenes of pestilence, and infection spread from the prisoner in the dock to the crowds in court. Physical uncleanness and disease were, as they always are, the sign and accompaniment of a yet more fearful moral corruption, the details of which may very well be passed over lightly. Cruel gaolers did not scruple to use the thumb-screw and other instruments of torture on such of their prisoners as had offended them,—on some who had given no reasonable ground of offence. Subterranean dungeons, the floors of which were covered with water,—in one instance to the depth of two or three feet,—were the only abode of many unfortunate captives. Rats made their meals on the living bodies of their human co-tenants of these loathsome dens. Often there was neither religious nor medical provision for the wretches whom crime or misfortune had immured therein. In some instances, surgeons refused attendance *because* of the frightful diseases which made havoc in the prisons to which they were attached. Men and women, debtors and the vilest offenders, the convicted and the unconvicted, were indiscriminately associated. The bad became hardened; the yet innocent lost their innocence; profligacy and licentiousness abounded. The circumstance which drew Howard's attention to these enormities is well known. As high-sheriff of the county of Bedford in 1773, he had been struck by seeing that several persons whom the jury had acquitted were re-committed for the non-payment of certain gaol-fees, which were, in many cases, the sole remuneration of the keepers. Innocent men, who had been in custody before trial, were detained after it as debtors for board and lodging, and for such board and lodging! He remonstrated. The magistrates sympathised with him in the abstract, which is as far as official sympathy generally goes; but required a precedent for levying rates on the county in lieu of these extortions. He travelled into other districts in search of precedents, and inquired into the several modes of prison-administration there prevalent. The result is well known. The veil was raised from many a chamber of horrors. The national conscience, not over-tender in those days, was touched. The work of amendment was begun in earnest. Like all great reformers, Howard, as Mr. Dixon points out, was the instrument of an awakening spirit of mercy and justice, which, had he failed, would probably have found some other organ. Montesquieu's celebrated sixth book had been published five-and-twenty years before Howard began his philanthropic labours. Beccaria's treatise, of which

he was an attentive student, appeared a few years later. Blackstone, Paley, Eden, and Bentham, were his contemporaries.\* In 1701-2, the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge had visited and reported on "Newgate and other gaols in and about London." In 1728-29, there was a parliamentary commission of inquiry into the state of the gaols of the kingdom. "When the first part of their report was made in Parliament," says Mr. Dixon, in whose biography will be found ample warrant in detail for our general statements, "the feelings of surprise and disgust which the horrible disclosures excited were such that the House at once ordered the arrest of the warders, tipstaffs, and others officers of the gaols reported upon, and passed a strong resolution, praying his Majesty to cause his Attorney-general, without delay, and in the most effectual manner, to prosecute them for the high crimes and misdemeanours with which they stood charged."† With all this, nothing really remedial was done. The time was ripe for reform, but the man was yet wanting.

From what has been said, and from much more that has been left unsaid, the conclusion is inevitable, that convict-discipline was unknown in the days of Howard's earlier toils, or resolved itself only into hard usage and safe detention,—bolts and bars, and the cat-o'-nine-tails. As little, when almost all offences, from shoplifting to murder, were capital, was there any scope for a just scheme of secondary punishments; or, except in very few instances, any enlightened or sound views of their application. This is not to be wondered at. In matters political, correct theory follows correct practice, rather than leads it; just as great poems precede formal arts of poetry. We grope our way to the truth; and having tried almost all wrong methods, are happy if we can blunder at last into the right one. Every error, distinctly perceived to be such, diminishes the chances of future mistake. If the history of secondary punishments were more generally studied, one-half at least of the crude suggestions of pamphleteers and newspaper-correspondents would never have seen the light. They are (often unconsciously) reproductions of devices which we thought had been dead and buried long ago, for public opinion had tried and sentenced them. We fancy that they *are* dead; and that their apparent resurrection is no real revival, but only some cunning galvanic trick.

The first instinctive feeling which all men have in the presence of moral evil, is the impulse to destroy or otherwise to disable it; to put it out of existence, or out of reach of opportunities of harm. This feeling, sound in itself, requires a large experience and humanity for its proper application. Our forefathers exem-

\* Life of Howard, pp. 221-227.

† Ibid., p. 13.

plified it in the simplest form of taking the life, or sequestering the person of the malefactor; dealing with him bodily, instead of with the bad passions and dense ignorance which for the time characterised him; aiming, in short, to expel him from society, rather than to assist him in getting rid of his criminal tendencies. We, perhaps, have rushed into an opposite extreme, and rely too exclusively on reformatory agencies; losing ourselves in the "wilder mazes" and no-thoroughfares of a spurious philanthropy, instead of striking into the straight and open path of justice. To hang as many as they could, and, where practicable, to transport the rest, was the "wisdom of our ancestors." To scruple at the introduction of any penal element into punishment at all is our more amiable weakness; a weakness, however, which shows itself as yet more in theory than in conduct.

We have spoken of the state of the prisons in Howard's days. He saw the beginning of our penal colonisation of Australia. Transportation, as a modern English institution, dates, indeed, from a much earlier period, from the reign of James I., who, by a questionable extension of the Act 39 Eliz. cap. 4, ordered the treasurer and council of the colony of Virginia "to send a hundred dissolute persons to Virginia, whom the knight-marshal would deliver to them for that purpose." This, however, was simply exile, without the additional infliction of servitude. By a statute of Charles II.'s reign, the judges are empowered to "execute, or transport to America for life, the moss-troopers of Cumberland and Northumberland." Readers of Mr. Macaulay know the fate which awaited the unhappy Monmouth's unhappier adherents,—sold as slaves to the plantations. In the reign of George I. acts were passed permitting the transportation of felons with benefit of clergy to the American colonies, and giving "to the person who contracted to transport them, to his heirs, successors, and assigns, a property and interest in the services of such offenders for the period of their sentences."\* On their arrival they were sold by auction. With the outbreak of the American war, in 1775, this resource ceased to be available. Government was left with a number of criminals on its hands, whom it was at a loss to dispose of. Humane recommendations were made. "It was suggested by some to ship the convicts of England off to the western coast of Africa, there to be turned loose among the negroes."† But the main controversy lay between the advocates of a penal and corrective discipline at home, and of transportation to Australia. There were symptoms at first of a desire really to sift the comparative merits of these two schemes. In the mean

\* Report of Sir W. Molesworth's Committee (1838), p. iii. See also *Political Dictionary*, article "Transportation."

† Chapters on Prisons, p. 130.

time the hulks were established,—at first as prisons for hard labour, afterwards as places of provisional detention for persons under sentence of transportation. Howard's inspection was the means of correcting many abuses, which we cannot say had crept into them, for they were coeval with their origin, but which at any rate he found there; and he seems to have looked on the system with some degree of favour. His continental travels, more especially his experience of the penal institutions of Holland, had convinced him that it was practicable for a nation to deal even with its worst criminals at home; and he regarded the establishment of the hulks as a step in the right direction. A further step, soon, unfortunately, to be retraced, was the passing of the Act, 19 Geo. III. cap. 74, for building two penitentiaries in England. At the urgent entreaties of Sir William Blackstone and others, Howard consented to become supervisor of the proposed prisons, in conjunction with two colleagues; but the death of one of them, and the querulous opposition of the other, led to his retirement, and the abandonment of the whole project. The advocates of transportation henceforth had it all their own way. The necessary orders in council were issued; and in 1788, more than seven hundred convicts, male and female, were disembarked near the spot where the city of Sydney now stands. In 1803, criminals were first received into Van Diemen's Land. In 1826, the free settlers of Norfolk Island, with their assigned servants, were removed thence, and the place converted into a penal settlement for convicts *reconvicted*.

The system which was in operation in the Australian colonies until 1842 may be briefly described. Immediately on the arrival of a convict-ship, the majority of its human cargo were allotted as servants to private individuals, without regard to the nature of the offences for which they had been sentenced, their term of punishment, or their general character,—with an eye solely to their probable capabilities as workmen. Their future fate depended entirely on the disposition of the masters into whose hands they fell, who, with certain nominal restrictions, were virtually absolute. Many of the worst men speedily attained a position of comfort not inferior to that of free labourers in the corresponding employments at home. Others, who were assigned to harsh and tyrannical masters,—the Legrees and Tom Gordons of the colony,—were subjected to a worse than American bondage. Thus the great essentials of penal discipline,—certainty of punishment, and proportion of punishments to deserts,—were utterly set at naught. The custom of employing assigned convicts, male and female, as domestic servants, was prevalent; but it was so fearfully depraving to the families, especially to the young children, of the settlers, that, in 1838, Lord Glenelg was compelled wholly to

prohibit it.\* The minority of convicts, for whom private service could not be obtained, were employed upon the public works. They were distributed into six classes, and subjected to varying degrees of hardship and privation, according to conduct. To complete this imperfect outline of the system, we must add, that "a convict, transported for seven years, obtained at the end of four years; for 14 years, at the end of six years; and for life, at the end of eight years, as a matter of course, unless his conduct had been very bad, a ticket-of-leave, enabling him, under certain regulations, to work on his own account."† These men, worthy or unworthy of them, often rose to positions of trust and influence. But they were obliged to report themselves annually to the authorities of their district; and, being still under sentence, could not sue for wages withheld, or other debts,—a disability which was occasionally taken advantage of. After a further period a free pardon was granted, and the ticket-of-leave man became an "emancipist." Those who gained their liberty by the expiration of their whole term were named "expirees."

We maintain that this system of punishment has failed as regards all the purposes at which punishment should aim. Colonel Collins's work on New South Wales gives the experience of the first fourteen years of its operation.‡ He was a government *employé*, and his testimony is unwilling where he saw it to be adverse; though its real bearing was often unperceived by himself. The facts brought to light by Sir William Molesworth's Committee in 1838 carry the history down to the time of their inquiries, and assuredly do not present matters in a more favourable light. They reveal results which it was needful should be made known; but that they have been given once is enough. It is desirable that they should be recorded in an accessible form, and then that there should be as little access to the record as possible. The *Mysteries of Paris* are healthier and more cheerful reading than some parts of this evidence. We confine ourselves to the following extracts from the report of the committee:

"In old communities, where there is a comparative want of employment, and profits are low, the amount of crime is not a perfectly sure test of the moral state of society, as the general uneasiness of the population gives birth to innumerable offences against property; but in those new communities, where there is a pressing demand for labour, and great facilities for acquiring wealth, crimes so numerous and so atrocious as those, perpetrated in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, truly indicate the depth of their moral depravity. It is difficult,

\* See the evidence of Dr. Ullathorne, Mr. Barnes, and Mr. Russell, before Sir W. Molesworth's Committee, qu. 225, 226, 403-407, 527-545.

† Report of Sir W. Molesworth's Committee, p. xvii.

‡ See the extracts in Bentham's *Panopticon versus New South Wales*.



indeed, to form an adequate conception of the frightful degree of crime which the above tables\* express; suffice it to say, that they show that, in proportion to the respective population of the two countries, the number of convictions for highway-robbery (including bush-ranging) in New South Wales, exceeds the total number of convictions for all offences in England; that rapes, murders, and attempts at murders, are as common in the former, as petty larcenies in the latter country. In short, in order to give an idea of the amount of crime in New South Wales, let it be supposed that the 17,000 offenders who last year (1837) were tried and convicted in this country for various offences, before the several courts of assize and quarter-sessions, had all of them been condemned for capital crimes; that 7,000 of them had been executed, and the remainder transported for life; that in addition, 120,000 other offenders had been convicted of the minor offences of forgery, sheep-stealing and the like, then in proportion to their respective populations, the state of crime and punishment in England and her Australian colonies would have been precisely the same.

The catalogue of convictions in New South Wales, by no means, however, exhausts the catalogue of crimes committed; for Judge Burton, in his charge to the grand jury of Sydney (to which document your Committee have already referred), after giving a vivid description of 'the crimes of violence, the murders, the manslaughters and drunken revels, the perjuries, the false witnesses from motives of revenge or reward, which in the proceedings before him had been brought to light,' after mentioning several cases of atrocious crimes, as characteristic of the general want of principle in the colony; after referring to the 'mass of offences, which were summarily disposed of by the magistrates, and the several police-offices throughout the colony,' spoke of the 'numerous undiscovered crimes, which every man, who heard him, or to whom the report of his words should come, would at once admit to have occurred within his own circle of knowledge;' and then he said, 'the picture presented to men's minds would be one of the most painful reflection; it would appear to one, who could look down upon that community, as if the main business of them all were the commission of crime, and the punishment of it; as if the whole colony were in motion towards the several courts of justice; and the most painful reflection of all must be, that so many capital sentences, and the execution of them, had not had the effect of preventing crime by way of example.' (pp. xxvii. xxviii.)

This last remark was not a mere rhetorical exaggeration of the judge's. Sir Francis Forbes, then chief-justice of Australia, mentioned "the case of several men at Norfolk Island cutting the heads of their fellow-prisoners with a hoe while at work, with a certainty of being detected, and with a certainty of being executed; and, according to him, they acted in this manner apparently without malice, and with very slight excitement, stating they knew they should be hanged, but it was better than being

\* Given at pp. xxv. xxvi. of the Report.

where they were" (p. xv.). Dr. Ullathorne, the Catholic vicar-general of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, thus relates his interview with the prisoners under sentence of death for mutiny and murder in Norfolk Island in 1834 :

"On my arrival at Norfolk Island I immediately proceeded, although it was late at night, to the gaol; the commandant having intimated to me that only five days could be allowed for preparation, and he furnished me with a list of the 13 who were to die, the rest having been reprieved; I proceeded therefore to the gaol, and upon entering the gaol I witnessed such a scene as I never witnessed in my life before. The men were originally confined in three cells; they were subsequently assembled together; they were not aware that any of them were reprieved. I found so little had they expected the assistance of a clergyman, that when they saw me they at once gave up a plot for escape, which they had very ingeniously planned; and which might, I think, have succeeded, so far as their getting into the bush. I said a few words to induce them to resignation; and I then stated the names of those who were to die; and it is a remarkable fact, that as I mentioned the names of those men who were to die, they one after the other, as their names were pronounced, dropped upon their knees and thanked God that they were to be delivered from that horrible place, whilst the others remained standing mute; it was the most horrible scene I ever witnessed. Those who were condemned to death appeared to be rejoiced." (p. xvi.)

The same witness mentions another circumstance, at which, sad as it is, it is almost impossible to repress a smile. In mercantile parlance, "a good man" is one to whom a tradesman may safely give credit; one who is solvent, in short.\* The public opinion of the convicts had its own abusive employment of the same phrase. "When a prisoner," says Dr. Ullathorne, "has been conversing with me respecting another individual, he has designated him as a good man. I suspected that he did not mean what he said; and on asking an explanation, he has apologised, and said, that it was the habitual language of the place, and that a bad man was called a good man; and that a man who was ready to perform his duty was generally called a bad man. There is quite a vocabulary of terms of that kind, which seems to have been invented to adapt themselves to the complete subversion of the human heart which I found subsisting." (p. xvi.)

In the penal settlements of Van Diemen's Land things were even worse than in Norfolk Island. The men of whom this is said were, it is true, the incorrigible among the convicts, those under punishment for aggravated crimes perpetrated after trans-

\* "Shylock. Antonio is a good man. . . . My meaning in saying that he is a good man, is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in subposition. . . . The man is notwithstanding sufficient. Three thousand ducats: I think I may take his bond." *Merchant of Venice*, act i. sc. 2.

portation. That the system, however, did not work more favourably in its other parts, is evident from the conclusion which the committee derived from the evidence taken before them, "that assigned convicts conduct themselves better than ticket-of-leave men, and ticket-of-leave men than emancipists or expirees. . . . Thus a convict is best behaved, while at the penal settlements, and his conduct deteriorates in proportion as he obtains more and more freedom; and is worst, when he has obtained liberty by the expiration of his sentence." (Report, p. xxii.) Three-fourths of the crime of the colony is said to have been due to the expirees. Such was the reformatory influence of the system, the moral benefit, on which so much eloquence is lavished now-a-days, of change of scene and associations to the criminal. Alas, *Caelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt*, is as true of convicts as of other persons. Granting that the material prosperity of Australia was for a time developed by the importation of slave-labour, we cannot consider this a good. Wealth and depravity growing together, increasing in a uniform ratio, constitute, perhaps, the most thoroughly hopeless social state that can be conceived. There were many of the conditions of success now so strongly insisted on. There was a non-criminal community, into which emancipists might have been absorbed; but into which unfortunately they were not absorbed. They constituted a distinct order, politically powerful, though socially tabooed; and a stigma remained even on their children. One of the witnesses before the recent Committee of the Lords, Mr. M. H. Marsh, a settler in New South Wales, who evidently has a hankering after transportation, though he allows that its revival is out of the question, says, "When the children of convicts begin to grow up and to have political influence, one of the great objections to the introduction of convicts is, that they keep up a class-distinction. Many of those sons of convicts were the most strenuous against the system of convicts, supposing that it had the effect of keeping them as a separate class from others, at least so they thought."\*

All this, it may be said, is an old tale; but it points a permanent moral. It shows the impossibility of amalgamating a large ex-convict class with a body of free settlers and residents. You may bring them into the closest contact, connect them by the nearest social relationships, still they will not coalesce. They remain what Mr. Disraeli calls "two nations." To adopt a scientific metaphor, they combine physically, not chemically. The degree to which the free population of New South Wales had been corrupted by the convict-system, is not to be judged of by their reluctance to forget the antecedents of the offenders,—

\* Report of the Select Committee of the Lords (1856), question 21.

which smacks rather of moral pharisaism than of moral purity; it is shown by their reluctance to part with convict-labour, even after the exposures of Sir William Molesworth's Committee. Familiarity with evil deadens the mind to its horrors. The attempt to renew transportation would probably excite a rebellion now. A witness before the Lords last year attributes this change in the popular feeling to pride. He thinks his compatriots have become "too large" for the system. If it be so, it is a pride which is closely allied to self-respect and public spirit, and we should be sorry to see it diminished.

Among the recommendations of the Committee of 1838, these two stood first: (1) "That Transportation to New South Wales, and to the settled districts of Van Diemen's Land, should be discontinued as soon as practicable;" and (2) "That crimes now punishable by Transportation should in future be punished by confinement with hard labour, at home or abroad, for periods varying from two to fifteen years." By the advice of Lord John Russell, who had been a member of the committee, and who had since become Secretary for the Colonies, an order in council was issued in 1840, abolishing transportation to New South Wales. It was his intention to provide additional means for the detention and punishment of convicts at home. But the House of Commons was not so wise as the minister. They refused to sanction his plan, and the old system was resumed. New South Wales, however, was no longer available. No additional outlet had been discovered. Convicts were therefore thrust in more than redoubled numbers upon Van Diemen's Land. Between the years 1840-1845 inclusive, more than 17,000 criminals were sent out to that colony, which has not yet recovered from the pauperism and vice thereby generated. The present governor, Sir Henry Young, who, as a servant of the crown, and as a stranger in the settlement, is not likely to sympathise too much with popular grievances and clamour, yet maintains that the mother-country is bound to defray some part of the enormous expenditure necessitated by her *impolicy*.\* On the formation of Sir Robert Peel's ministry, in 1841, Lord Derby (then Lord Stanley) was appointed to the Colonial Office. No wisdom, we believe, could have solved the problem with which it fell to him to deal. The disproportion of convicts to the free population in Van Diemen's Land (the causes of which have just been indicated) rendered recurrence to the old method of assignment impracticable, under any modifications whatsoever. There were no prisons for separate confinement. It was inevitable to try the opposite plan of association. On the arrival of the offenders, the worst of them were sent off to Norfolk Island;

\* First Report of the Commons Committee (1856), question 496.

the others were divided into (what were called) "probationary gangs," to be employed on the public works. Laudable efforts were made to appeal to the hopes as well as the fears of the men,—to hold out positive encouragements to good conduct, as well as deterrents from bad; but they were unavailing. To begin by throwing criminals together, without any preparatory individual discipline, is to begin by a process of deterioration;—it is to plunge them yet deeper in guilt before making an effort to raise them out of it. The difficulty was enhanced by the insufficient number, for effectual supervision, of the officers in charge of the convicts; by their unsuitable character, in many instances; and by the inadequate provision of buildings for separation at night. Good conduct in the probation-gang was to be rewarded by the granting of the "probation-pass;" and this might be followed by additional liberty with a ticket-of-leave. Into the details of these arrangements we need not enter.\* There was very little good conduct to be rewarded. The almost inevitable failure of the first probationary stage insured the failure of all the rest; moreover the demand for labour in the colony was so slight, and the supply so great, that "it was rather a misfortune for a convict to be set at large."† Thus the proposed inducements to amendment became null, or even had an unhappy effect; the moral evils of the old system were repeated, with aggravated virulence, under the new one, and without any of those economical advantages which appeared for a time to accompany the former. Under these circumstances, it was resolved to suspend transportation to Van Diemen's Land for a year or two. But with obstinate perseverance in the wrong path, inquiries were set on foot as to the possibility of founding a new penal settlement in North Australia. Before any steps could be taken in this matter, Sir Robert Peel and his colleagues had resigned.

Under the government of Lord John Russell other and wiser measures were adopted. The system of assignment without a preliminary term of probation had failed. The system of probation in gangs had failed also. It remained to try what would be the effect of preceding actual transportation by a period of *separate cellular confinement at home*. A certain number of convicts were therefore subjected to the discipline of Pentonville Prison before being sent out. The conduct of these men—who, however, were carefully selected—generally proved good; but they were, according to the testimony of Mr. Marsh,

\* They are very minutely stated in Lord Stanley's despatch to Sir John Franklin, Nov. 25, 1842. See Papers on Convict Discipline, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 3d April 1843.

† Mr. Waddington's evidence before the Commons, First Report, question 283.

“more stupid, and also more helpless,” than “the old convicts.”\* This was not an unnatural result of long seclusion; but at the same time, the moral advantages of it, when accompanied by proper training, and relieved by industrial employment, are obvious. It gives opportunity for reflection,—nay, almost compels it; and with reflection, conscience, if it be not really dead, but only sleeping, will generally awaken. Its benumbing physical and intellectual effects might, it was thought, be counteracted, if it were followed by a term of hard labour in association, which would lose much of its corrupting influence on men thus sobered and prepared. It might even form a useful test of the reality of any apparent reformation,—a good trial of strength. It was therefore determined that offenders under sentence of transportation, instead of being immediately conveyed to the colonies, should pass through a period of penal servitude; of which not less than six, nor more than eighteen, months was to be spent in separate confinement, and the remainder on the public works in England, or in Gibraltar or Bermuda. The duration of the latter part of the punishment was dependent, partly on the length of the prisoner’s sentence, partly on his general behaviour,—of which a daily record was kept,—and on his industry, as tested by a system of task-work. At its expiration, he was transported, with a ticket-of-leave. He was not, however, released from detention by the colonial authorities till he had formed an engagement with some settler for a year’s service. A portion of his wages was withheld for repayment to the Government. If under a sentence of seven years, he was required to refund 7*l.* 10*s.*, if of twenty years, or life, 25*l.*,—at the rate of 5*l.* a-year. When this was done, he might obtain a conditional pardon, if his conduct had been good, in the former case for a year and a half, in the latter for five years. The ticket-of-leave man received what might remain of his wages after the deductions specified, with clothes and rations. Arrangements were made for sending out the wives and families of convicts, as soon as either party could guarantee the payment of half their passage-money.†

Lord Grey eulogises this scheme, of which he was the principal author and promoter, in the most unqualified manner. In its home-portion we believe it is not undeserving of his praise; and in all its parts it was no doubt a great improvement on any thing that had preceded it. But if it worked well, it did not convince the colonists that it worked well. The negotiations with New South Wales for the renewal of transportation in this amended form failed. The Anti-Convict League continued

\* Evidence before the Lords (1856), ques. 36.

† See Lord Grey’s *Colonial Policy*, vol. ii. pp. 23-28.

their agitation against it in Van Diemen's Land, *where it was tried*, till they enforced its relinquishment. The Cape of Good Hope was roused into something like rebellion by the attempt to introduce it there. Only Western Australia, from whatever motive, would have any thing to say to it. There had previously been no transportation thither. She, therefore, knew not what she asked. She could receive at most six or seven hundred convicts yearly; while on an average between three and four thousand offenders were sentenced to transportation, in regard to two-thirds of whom it had been the practice to carry out the sentence.\* Since this could no longer be done, it was necessary to devise some other mode of punishment. In this posture of affairs, the Act 16 and 17 Victoria, cap. 99, now in force, was passed. It came into operation on the 1st of September 1853. We will briefly state its provisions, with the amendments which the Government propose to introduce.

It abolishes transportation for any term under fourteen years, substituting in all such cases a specified period of penal servitude. Where longer sentences are necessary, it is left to the discretion of the judges to award either transportation or servitude. The following scale of penal equivalents will show the nature of the changes effected by this measure more clearly than any other mode of stating them :

- |   |       |   |
|---|-------|---|
| 1. Penal servitude for four years                                       | } = { | Transportation for not less than seven years ( <i>abolished</i> ).                          |
| 2. Penal servitude for not less than four, and not more than six years  | } = { | Transportation for not less than seven, nor more than ten years ( <i>abolished</i> ).       |
| 3. Penal servitude for not less than six, and not more than eight years | } = { | Transportation for not less than ten, nor more than fifteen years ( <i>discretionary</i> ). |
| 4. Penal servitude for not less than six, and not more than ten years   | } = { | Transportation for more than fifteen years ( <i>discretionary</i> ).                        |
| 5. Penal servitude for life   | =     | Transportation for life ( <i>discretionary</i> ).   |

The regulations according to which the act is administered are in outline these : Convicts must pass nine months in solitary confinement (more than this was found to have an injurious effect mentally and physically), after which they are transferred to the public works. Good behaviour during detention is rewarded by badges and distinctions of dress, by increased gratuities set down to the prisoner's credit, by permission to write and receive letters and to have visitors more frequently, and

\* In the five years, 1848-52, the number sentenced to transportation was 16,229, and the number actually transported 10,963. (Mr. Waddington's evidence, First Report of the Commons Committee, 1856, ques. 16. See also Appendix, No. 1 A.)

by slight indulgences as regards food. The punishments of misconduct are, in addition to forfeiture of these privileges, the usual ones of restriction to a bread-and-water diet, the dark cell, and the lash; which, however, is seldom resorted to, only in extreme cases, and when every thing else has failed. Both in the public works and in separate confinement, there is sufficient provision for the secular and religious instruction of the convicts. The beneficial operation of these rules is shown by the fact,—as to which all the administrators of the system agree,—that the prisoners generally leave the works improved in direct proportion to the length of the time of their detention. Their conduct, on the whole, is pronounced by Colonel Jebb to be very satisfactory; but since the penal-servitude men have learned that under no circumstances will any portion of their sentence be remitted, it has perceptibly deteriorated, and the value of their labour diminished. Sir George Grey, therefore, proposes to make the terms of penal servitude equal to the terms of transportation for which they were substituted; providing, at the same time, that a third or fourth of such terms may be remitted in case of exemplary behaviour and industry. This increases the minimum of confinement that must be undergone beyond the limit now legal; but it holds out the incentive of hope, which was wanting before. The abolition of transportation for a shorter period than fourteen years having reduced the number of offenders capable of being sent abroad below the demands of Western Australia, and rendered it impossible to comply with the condition of selection on which alone she had consented to receive them, it is proposed that any prisoner sentenced to penal servitude may be transported. Special sentences of transportation, therefore, will no longer be necessary, and they are to be done away with; the discretion which the judges had before being transferred to the executive, who have greater opportunities of estimating the fitness of men for colonial labour than can be gained by a mere glance at them as they stand in the dock. The practical hiatus in the scale of punishments between the ordinary term of two years' imprisonment and the shortest period of penal servitude, is to be filled up by empowering the judges to award penal servitude for any period longer than two years. The advantage of this is twofold. It will allow of a nicer adaptation of penalties to varying degrees of guilt, and will subject a larger number of offenders to the discipline of the convict-prisons, in lieu of the faulty system still in force in the great majority of county and borough gaols. Criminals whom it is determined to transport will undergo a preliminary confinement here, though for a much shorter period than at present. Sir George Grey speaks of "a few months" as the limit of it. But instead of



*entering* the colony with tickets-of-leave, they will obtain them only after a second term of imprisonment and labour there. "Those that obtained their ticket-of-leave after arriving in the colony," according to Captain Henderson, comptroller-general of convicts in Western Australia, "as a general rule, did better than those who came direct from England as ticket-of-leave men." The latter are "more liable to get into trouble than those who have had some little drilling in the colony. They come out with very exaggerated notions, which you cannot avoid; but after they have been some little time in prison in the colony, they learn from those around them what they may expect."\* The establishment at Swan River is as efficient, as regards supervision, he states, as any in England; though the industrial training received here is of the greatest value, and ought not to be dispensed with.

There is much force in all this; but we doubt whether any considerable benefit can be looked for from only a few months' labour on the public works at home, with a long sea-voyage interposed between it and its renewal on the other side of the water. Convict-ships are, it is true, greatly improved. They are no longer the floating hells they once were. Still the men on board are inevitably thrown much together; they are unemployed; the surveillance over them must be at best but lax. We are disposed to think it would be expedient to retain the period of detention at home now usual,—about two years; and *add* to this such a term of confinement and labour in the colony as may be needful to efficient drilling there. A measure of this kind seems requisite also to equalise the punishment of those on whom the same sentence of penal servitude will be passed, which will be very unequal according as it is carried out in England or in Western Australia. At present, seven years' transportation is regarded by criminals as a much lighter infliction than four years' penal servitude at home. This latter period is to be lengthened. Transportation ought therefore to be made correspondingly more severe. When we add, that the hulks are to be abolished, and that the power of granting tickets-of-leave is to be retained, until the relative merits of conditional and unconditional discharge in case of remission of sentence can be more completely tested, we have stated all the positive proposals of the Government.

So much clamour has been raised against the giving of licences to be at large, and such enormous evils have been attributed to it, that it is needful to say a few words in correction of prevalent misapprehensions. When the Act 16 and 17 Vict. cap. 99, was passed, the Government had a balance in hand of

\* Report of the Lords Committee (1856), question 876.

9,550 convicts, sentenced to transportation chiefly for the periods of seven and ten years; of whom the vast majority, for want of any colonial outlet, were obliged to be kept at home. In accordance with the ordinary practice in the case of men so detained, they would have been released unconditionally on the expiration of half the term of their punishment. To diminish the danger which might be apprehended from their wholesale return to society unreformed, it was thought well to encourage them to good conduct in prison, by holding out to the seven-years men the prospect of discharge after three years instead of three years and a half; to the ten-years men, after four instead of after five years' confinement. This provision has been censured, as offering an inducement to hypocrisy. The late Baron Alderson made some ingenious but highly fanciful remarks upon it in December last, at the opening of the winter assize at Liverpool; in return for which the grand jury innocently voted him their thanks. "The offender," he said, "turns up the white of his eyes, and pretends to be a converted sinner. The chaplain considers himself complimented on the effect of his administration, and he recommends him to be set free. A pardon is given, which is nothing but an incentive; and then you have the results, in the great number of these people who are not really reformed, but only pretend to be so for the purpose of escaping punishment."\* Every syllable of this statement, uttered apparently without the least misgiving, and received in simple faith, is directly, though no doubt unintentionally, false; and had been contradicted, by anticipation, in the evidence of the Directors of Convict Prisons and others, published in the Reports of the Select Committee of the House of Commons more than six months before.† The chaplain has nothing whatever to do with the time of the prisoner's release; professions of religion (truthful or insincere) are not the "open sesame" which will unlock the prison-gates. Remission of sentence can be procured only by industry and obedience to prison-rules, without reference to the motives of the prisoner, which it is impossible that any man can certainly know. An *opposite* procedure would, to use the words of Colonel Jebb, "be open to the objection of holding out a bonus to hypocrisy, which, under present circumstances, is not one of the sins of prisoners."‡ If our judges choose to assume, in addition to their proper official duties, the functions of moral and political censorship, they are bound at least to inform themselves accurately of the social phenomena and the administrative

\* Report in the *Times*, Dec. 10, 1856.

† See in particular the testimony of Colonel Jebb, Captain Whitty, and Mr. Thwaites, First Report, questions 972, 973, 1076, 2860, 2864.

‡ First Report, 1076.

rules on which they comment, and not to mislead the public mind by the dissemination of old delusions long ago authoritatively contradicted. The deference popularly and (on the whole) rightly entertained for whatever falls from the judicial bench, even on other than points of law, renders it needful that they should speak only that which they know, and not carelessly give their sanction to lying rumour. The ticket-of-leave men are released only a little earlier than in any case they must have been; but under circumstances which give some presumption that they are better qualified for freedom than those who have not earned a similar remission of sentence, or than they themselves would have been if they had had no opportunity of earning it. Moreover all control over them is not abandoned when they go into the world. On the back of their tickets they read that "the power of revoking or altering the license of a convict will most certainly be exercised in case of his misconduct. . . . To produce a forfeiture of license, it is by no means necessary that he should be convicted of any new offence. If he associates with notoriously bad characters, leads an idle and dissolute life, or has no visible means of obtaining an honest livelihood, &c., it will be assumed that he is about to relapse into crime, and he will be at once apprehended, and re-committed to prison under his original sentence."\* This condition, however, has not been acted upon. Sir George Grey has distinctly refused to authorise the recommittal to prison of any ticket-of-leave men for the suspicious circumstances above enumerated. He requires that they shall be convicted of some legal offence. This relaxing of the check kept over them does not, of course, place them in the position of men who have received a free pardon, or worked out their whole time. A delinquency punishable with a week's imprisonment, perpetrated by a seven-years' man immediately after his discharge with license, would return him to the public works for the remaining four years of his term. It may be that to send convicts back to penal servitude merely for suspicious circumstances, would be leaving too great a discretion in the hands of the police. But if the practice is not conformed to the regulations, the regulations ought to be conformed to the practice. To hold out a threat which there is no intention to execute, is to bring the entire system into contempt. The laxity which criminals experience in one part of its administration, they will speculate on finding in another; and may thus even be encouraged to believe that small offences will be overlooked, or simply punished in the ordinary manner, without bringing upon them that unexpired portion of their original sentence which it is intended should hang *in terrorem* over their heads. In all, 16 per cent

\* First Report, p. 62.

of those to whom tickets have been granted have, up to this time, had their licenses revoked. The number of *ordinary* re-committals is 31 or 32 per cent. Many licensed convicts (the phrase, we admit, is ambiguous) no doubt escape identification as such on trial, and commit several crimes before they are apprehended. But the same remark applies to other criminals. The only thing which renders the favourable comparison suggested by the percentage of re-committals just given at all unreliable is, that, allowing for the average period of impunity on which habitual offenders may reckon, many of the men at large on license have probably not yet reached the end of their tether. There is therefore ground for thinking that the known percentage of relapses among them will continue to increase with the progress of time; though to what extent can only be matter of arbitrary conjecture. All we can positively state yet is, that there is no pretence for alleging that the system has failed; though it would be premature to assert that it has succeeded. Under these circumstances, ministers have, perhaps, adopted the wisest course in leaving the question between conditional and absolute remission of sentence open, to be decided by further experience.

Good so far as it goes, it will be observed that the measure which has been described goes a very little way. It rather declines to deal with the problem of secondary punishments, and is a postponement of it to a more favourable season, than successfully copes with it. Its provisions, like those of the act it is intended to amend and supersede, are confined entirely to convicts guilty of what are called serious offences, who will incur sentences of two years' penal servitude or more. Yet these form a very small proportion of the entire number of persons who annually pass through our gaols,—less; there is reason to believe, than 20 per cent. But the crimes committed by them strike the imagination more; and at the same time their numbers are more manageable. It is therefore natural that experiments in convict-discipline should be begun upon them; but that any measures which are confined to this class can ever prove extensively useful, or produce a perceptible change in the moral condition of the country, he must be sanguine indeed who will allow himself to hope. And this shows the futility of any reliance upon transportation as a means of relieving ourselves from the presence of the worst class of criminals. We are merely lopping away the branches, while we suffer the trunk to stand deeply rooted as ever in the earth; cutting off the hydra's heads without searing the wound; and they grow again more rapidly than we can strike them down. The comparatively few whom, if it were likely that transportation could ever become practicable again on a considerable scale, we should be able to send away, would hardly af-

fect the amount or character of crimes at home. With a reserve of from eighty to ninety thousand minor delinquents, every year qualifying themselves to graduate in the higher ranks of guilt, the subtraction from our population of two or three thousand more serious offenders, though not, of course, without its effect, would yet make less difference than is commonly imagined. A considerable proportion, moreover, of the worst crimes are not the work of habitual malefactors, but of persons betrayed by sudden passion into guilt; and who, if retained in this country, would probably not relapse into wrong courses. Crimes of violence against the person, when unaccompanied by robbery, are to a very large extent due to this class. But discussion as to transportation might as well be postponed till some probability appears that any colony will be found willing to receive English offenders. What Western Australia has done, it is frequently urged, others of our dependencies may do. But the case of Western Australia is peculiar. The habit of granting public lands at almost nominal prices, introduced there a class of settlers who had neither capital, skill, nor energy; and free labour was therefore almost repelled from the colony, which, of course, languished and declined. The importation of convicts made labour cheaper, and in so far tended to develop the resources of the country. It also necessitated a large expenditure on the part of the home government; and it is this expenditure which, as Mr. Elliott and other witnesses more than hint, attaches the settlers of Western Australia to transportation.\* If a wiser policy with regard to the crown-lands had originally been adopted,—if a reasonably high upset-price had been fixed upon them, and they had been disposed of by competition,—they would have come into the hands of a higher class of holders, with capital at their disposal; free labour would have been attracted thither by the prospect of an adequate reward; and these two elements of material prosperity being thus secured, the need of convicts would probably not have been felt, nor the demand for them made. The colony would have been self-supporting. It is doubtful how far the rapid growth in wealth and population of New South Wales even is really due to the system of transportation, to which it is generally attributed. For a long time it did not prosper under it. The change for the better in its condition was contemporary with a change in the mode of disposing of the crown-lands, substituting sale by auction at a minimum price, at first of 12s. and afterwards of 1l. an acre, instead of disposal by grant at 5s.† This put estates into the possession of those

\* See First Report of the Commons Committee, qu. 377-385, 1354, 4095.

† Lord Grey's *Colonial Policy*, vol. i. p. 311.

who were necessarily capitalists, at least to a certain amount; and who could use and develop the resources of the soil, instead of letting them run to waste. If transportation is adopted, convicts must be sent either to penal settlements,—where they, with the requisite staff of officers, will be the sole population, as was the case on Norfolk Island,—or to colonies where there is an independent free population. In the latter case, the colony must either be prosperous or declining. If it be prosperous, it does not need convict-labour; it can secure free labour. If depressed, convicts must be sent out in large numbers, and employed on merely nominal wages, their labour must be virtually slave-labour, to do any good. Constituting themselves in such a place the great bulk of the working-class, there will be no reputable society into which they can be absorbed on their emancipation. The employment of them will have a tendency to make all manual toil infamous, and to form a class corresponding to the “white trash” in the slave states of America. To prevent such a result, and the demoralisation which experience shows must ensue when the convicts form more than a certain small proportion of all the inhabitants of a colony, Sir Archibald Alison suggests, that for every offender sent out there should be three or four free emigrants gratuitously forwarded. What kind of *labourers* does he think would require to have their expenses paid for them? Only those who have done ill at home, and who would (allowing for exceptional cases of blameless misfortune) do equally ill abroad. Further, what kind of *men* does he think would go out in this way, as the *confrères* of convicts? Only those morally not much above the level of such offenders. There is an honourable *esprit-de-corps* among the better part of the working-classes, which would resent the degradation of their order, and which at home is often, we regret to say, a bar to the restoration to an honest life of those who are desirous of returning to it. Moreover, a colony which requires convict-labour, because it cannot hold out adequate inducements for free, is not very likely to be able to deal with the three or four free immigrants whom it is proposed to send with every offender.\* But these convicts, it is said, might be employed in public works of various kinds,

\* Western Australia itself affords an instructive illustration of this truth. “The Government promised,” says Mr. Elliott, “to send free labourers to any colony which would receive convicts. . . . In Western Australia, . . . several of the free people, healthy and of good character, long remained chargeable to the public; the consequence is, that the Government has been obliged for a time somewhat to slacken the speed of the free emigration; we could not take people of good character and strong bodily health from this country and send them to the antipodes that they might become paupers.” (First Report of the Commons Committee, qu. 342.) “In 1854, no less than 2,500*l.*, in round numbers, was expended in the support of emigrants who had become burdensome to the public.” (Ibid. qu. 355.)

which are needful, but which the colonists have not means of executing for themselves. We doubt whether it is the duty of the home government to lay upon the tax-payers in England the expense of bridges, railroads, prisons, &c., at the other side of the globe.\* Further, the question arises, What is to become of transports when their sentence is expired? If the works which they have formed have stimulated trade to such an extent that there is demand for their service as free men, they will degrade the working-class in the manner that has been indicated. If there be not such demand, they will of course sink into pauperism, and revert to crime as a means of subsistence. These remarks apply with still greater force to the case of mere penal settlements, where government officials are the sole free population. What is to be done in such places as these with offenders whose time is out? There seems no alternative but to send them home again, as they are now sent from Bermuda and Gibraltar. But our object was to get rid of them: instead of this, we shall have them again worse and more dangerous than they were at first; for the discipline of a convict-establishment abroad cannot be so efficient as at home. The want of publicity, and of that system of graduated responsibility, of check and counter-check, which exists in England, renders abuses almost inevitable in the management of convicts transported abroad. The distance of the home government, and the difficulty of procuring reliable information as to what occurs in a remote settlement, place an amount of discretionary power in the hands of subordinate officials with which it is in every respect undesirable that they should be intrusted. They become virtually absolute. Moreover fit men will not exile themselves to assume functions so little attractive as the charge of convicts, except under inducements which it is impossible to hold out on a

\* Sir George Grey states that he is not able to meet the demands of the Admiralty for convict-labourers in our own dockyards, &c. Up to May 1856, 3,500 convicts had been sent to Western Australia, at an expense of 400,000*l.* "These men," says Colonel Jebb, "were selected as being the best of our men; they were selected for good conduct; and I have no doubt that 2,500 of those men would have returned, in this country, to an honest life. I therefore look upon it that you have paid 400,000*l.* up to this period for getting rid of 1000 men." (First Report, qu. 1347.) "The colony," says Mr. Elliot, "has gained nothing but the large Government expenditure; . . . the convicts have not prospered, and they have not reformed. If this be the case in Western Australia, where we really had some great advantages, for we had a free community already existing, an admirable climate, and roads ready formed, it will be for the Committee to judge hereafter what the prospects of success would be in an entirely new territory." (Third Report, qu. 4095.) That any apparent prosperity in Western Australia was really due to Government expenditure is clear from the fact, that while there was a great increase, between 1849 and 1854, in the value of imports, there was but slight increase in that of exports; the latter being, of course, the true index of the material well-being of a community. See First Report, qu. 347, 348.

sufficiently extensive scale. Again, it should be kept in mind, as Jeremy Bentham long ago pointed out, that transportation involves a serious injustice, unless means be taken for bringing to England, on the expiration of his sentence, every convict who may wish to return. A sentence of expatriation for a limited term of years must not be converted into banishment for life, as it often practically is. Here again we see a moral difficulty in the way of the mere "getting-rid-of-the-convicts" policy, which may be disregarded, but cannot be fairly overcome. We want by transportation to relieve ourselves of our *worst* criminals. Free colonies (if they will consent to receive any) will consent to receive only our *best*. The proposed amendments in the act of 1853, to which we have so often adverted, are intended to give the opportunity of selecting the least dangerous offenders for removal to Western Australia, and for keeping the most desperate characters, the incorrigibles, at home. But apart from these considerations, to the dogmatic assertion, We must transport our criminals, the question, *Whither?* is a sufficient answer. The Falkland Islands, indeed, of which it is the fashion to say so much now, would probably afford means for employing convicts usefully, while under punishment, in the formation of a dry dock, and the repair of vessels which may touch there, after rounding Cape Horn, as well as in the fisheries with which they abound. But these occupations of all others would present the greatest facilities for escape. And it is difficult to see what could be done with the men after discharge. There is no probability of a large free population ever being collected in the islands. The only kind of farming for which their soil and products are adapted is the breeding and grazing of cattle, which requires the employment of but few men. The islands do not produce wheat; neither coals nor minerals are to be found in them. Under these circumstances, when the suggested docks are once completed, and the fences for the preservation of the tussac grass erected, it would be difficult to find work for any considerable number of convicts, or means of disposing of them when they regain their liberty. It is suggested by some that grants of land should be made them; that they should be set up in the world as graziers.\* We have not yet heard the proposition that ought, in consistency, to be subjoined to this—that their farms shall be well stocked at the public expense. We need not waste words in arguing against any such scheme. If transportation is to be a punishment at all, it must be a terror to evil-doers, and not an advantage to them. Every practicable facility, indeed, should be allowed for providing discharged offenders with the means of honest subsistence; but it should be, so far as the procuring

\* See Captain Sullivan's Evidence before the Lords, especially qu. 500-502.



of it is independent of their own exertions, a bare subsistence, on which the honest labourer, however humble his own lot, can look without envy. Apart, however, from the moral objections of various kinds which attach to the suggestion just mentioned, the economical ones, which have been developed in respect to the too cheap disposal of the crown-lands in Australia, apply to it in all their force. Taking every thing into account, we believe that the Committee of the Lords came to a wise decision when they resolved, "That according to the evidence before this Committee, it would not be desirable to send convicted prisoners . . . . to the Falkland Islands." Of the countless other localities which have been named, by those who knew little about them, to those who knew less,—the Gulf of Carpentaria, Northern Australia, Hudson's Bay Territory, Vancouver's Island, &c.,—we need say nothing, because, by common consent, they are altogether out of the question. Political considerations and peculiarities of soil,—one or the other, or both,—present insuperable obstacles to converting them into penal colonies.

We have now reviewed the main features of recent convict-systems, and discussed the expediency or feasibility of proposed legislation. The conclusion which we derive from the facts to which our attention has been called is, that transportation has had a fair, a too patient trial; that it has altogether failed; that this failure, though aggravated occasionally by incidental causes, was yet inherent in the nature of the punishment itself, from which no permanent good to our dependencies, or real relief to ourselves, or opportunity of reform to the convicts, can ever be expected. Further, if all this be questioned, the indisputable fact still remains, that we have no colony at once fitted and willing to receive the sweepings of our gaols. The alternative to which we are compelled, therefore, is, to keep our convicts at home, and make the best of them. Till we recognise this as inevitable, no good will be done. We regret that Ministers should have thought fit to amuse the public mind with hopes (which they themselves evidently do not share) of a renewal and extension of transportation. In this way they manage to put off for a time the necessity of grappling with a great social problem; but the difficulty will increase with delay. Without entering into details, for which we have no space, and which would be premature at present, we believe that the development and extended application of the system successfully pursued in our convict-prisons, and its adoption in all places of confinement in the kingdom, is a step which it is very desirable, and will be soon found needful, to take. Sir G. Grey's proposal to legalise sentences of penal servitude for terms of two years and more, is an advance in the direction indi-

cated; but it is only a very slight advance. More than 70,000 criminals are annually sentenced to less than six months' confinement. They are imprisoned in our county and borough gaols, where they are supported and yet further demoralised at the public expense. The terms of detention now usual are too short to allow of any effectual reformatory influences, if such could exist in provincial prisons as at present administered. By the establishment of industrial prisons of various kinds in the several districts of the kingdom, the great mass of English offenders might be made to defray the cost of their own maintenance while in custody, and perhaps something more. This is no mere hypothesis. Though a result never yet accomplished in England, it has been achieved elsewhere. "In the gaols of Massachusetts, in the United States," says Mr. Pearson, "the prisoners, out of the produce of their industry, maintained themselves and their keepers, paid for their diet, clothing, and bedding, for the repairs of the prison, and the salary of every officer, from the governor down to the lowest turnkey; and by the sale of surplus productions they were enabled to present each prisoner, on his discharge, with four dollars and a new suit of clothes—to create a sinking-fund to liquidate the cost of constructing the building, and to subscribe a considerable sum to that excellent institution, the Boston Prison Discipline Society."\* Effects scarcely less successful have been realised in Belgium and France; in the Spanish prison of Valencia, under Colonel Montesinos; and at Munich, by M. Obermaier.

Hard labour during detention would, as we have on another occasion urged, have both a deterring and reforming effect, in addition to its economical advantages. No doubt a considerable outlay would be requisite at first; but it would be money well invested. No doubt it would be difficult to find fit officers for as many industrial prisons as would be needed if the system were all at once introduced; but by trying the experiment (if it can be so named, after its proved success in the United States and on the Continent) in one or two districts, and extending it as its usefulness became manifest, a training school would be formed for future officers, the number of whom might be proportioned to the demand for them. Whether the prisons should be mainly agricultural, or in any cases fitted up rather for manufactures and the practice of mechanical arts, is a question which need not be entered on now. The general principle once granted, that convicts must be kept at home, and made self-supporting, experience will gradually show the best means of securing these ends. We should have, we believe, comparatively few recommitments. Prisoners on their discharge would still have obstacles to

\* Letter to the Lord Mayor, pp. 35, 36.

contend with, but to a degree much less than at present. They would be fitter for work, and more inclined to it, than now is ordinarily the case; and this being known, they would meet with readier employment. The formation of patronage-societies would no doubt be a useful aid to many discharged offenders, and, by affording timely assistance, might prevent relapses into crime otherwise inevitable. But though a valuable appendage, such societies do not form a part of a judicious scheme of secondary punishments, and are therefore beyond the scope of our subject; our remarks on which we conclude with the following forcible reflections of Mr. Pearson :

“If the honest millions, as they pass through life, can, and do, during what is recognised as the producing age, not only provide for their own wants, but create a large surplus, by which the non-producing classes are supported and the institutions of society are maintained, it surely ought not to be endured that any portion of the same race, and of the producing age, . . . should be permitted to renounce their allegiance to the fundamental law of their existence, and declare in practice, that by the sweat of the face of other men, they will eat of earth's choicest fruits.

The only rational, merciful, and effectual corrective of such offenders against all laws, human and divine, is, I repeat, to classify and place them in secure prisons, surrounded by lofty and substantial walls, to subject them week by week to seventy, or, at least, sixty hours of useful and profitable work, to allow them sixty, or at most, seventy hours for food, rest, cleanliness, and their other bodily requirements; to give them twenty-eight hours with means and opportunities for mental, moral, and spiritual instruction, and for the public and private worship of God.\* . . . If any Government having thus placed at its disposal annually the hundred millions of hours of confiscated labour, which 30,000 criminals would yield, cannot make the class not only self-supporting, but productive of a surplus for the future benefit of those who produce it, such a Government would be pronounced by men of business unfit to be at the head of a great manufacturing and commercial people.”†

\* Of course we do not insist on the exact distribution of time which recommends itself to Mr. Pearson.

† Letter to the Lord Mayor, pp. 30, 31.

## ART. III.—THE CLUBS OF LONDON.

*Miscellanies : Prose and Verse.* By W. M. Thackeray. Vol. I.  
*The Book of Snobs.* London : Bradbury and Evans.

*Handbook of London, Past and Present.* By Peter Cunningham,  
F.S.A. London : John Murray.

*Letters of Horace Walpole.* Complete Edition. Edited by Peter  
Cunningham, F.S.A. Vols. I. and II. London : Bentley.

WHY does not some great author write the "Mysteries of the Club-Houses ; or, St. James's Street unveiled ?" asks the great historiographer of the snobs. Considering the magnificent figure those palaces of Pall Mall make in our metropolis,—the celebrities, social, political, and literary, included in their thousands of members,—the associations which float about the older of them, as White's and Brookes's, Boodle's and Arthur's,—the stateliness of their decorations, the luxuriousness of their upholstery, the elaborateness of their kitchens,—it has always puzzled us why "the Clubs of London" have not been more written about. We only know of one book under that title,\* and a very miserable book it is. The first volume is made up of threadbare stories of Brookes's, dully, pertly, inaccurately, and lengthily told ; with irrelevant chapters on Irish bulls, the Irish peasantry, and fighting Fitzgerald. The second volume comprises a hundred-and-thirty pages of tedious personality about the sublime Society of the Beefsteaks ; a chapter on the Hole-in-the-Wall Club at Norwich ; another on "the King of Clubs," the least intolerable part of the book ; and a collection of supplementary anecdotes,—the new ones not good, and the good ones not new. The Clubs of London deserve a historian of a very different kind from the Irish bookseller's hack ; in which class, from internal evidence, we should rank the author of this trashy compilation.

Properly comprehended, the history of London Clubs is the history of London manners since the Restoration. Nay, tracing the Club to its antecedents, we fairly get back to Shakespeare's London, with what Ben Jonson's Tom Barber calls its four cardinal quarters of news—

"The Court, St. Paul's, Exchange, and Westminster Hall."

The Club now-a-days, in fact, is for your man-about-town what the staple of news, the ordinary, and the tobacco-office, together,

\* The Clubs of London ; with Anecdotes of their Members, Sketches of Character, and Conversations. In 2 vols. London : Colburn, 1828.

were for the gallant of the seventeenth century. Old Dekker, in his *Gull's Horn-Book*, was writing *The Book of Snobs* of his day. Just as The Snobographer describes old Jawkins in the coffee-room of "the No-Surrender," waving the Standard, swaggering, and haranguing; or Spitfire, great upon foreign affairs, and oracular on the treasons of Lord Palmerston and the designs of Russia; or Fawney, sidling along in his shiny boots, with his endless greasy simper, and his profound interest in every body's business; or Messrs. Spavin and Cockspur growling together in a corner about sporting matters; or Wiggle and Waggle, the lady-killers; or Captain Shindy, throwing all the club into an uproar about the quality of his mutton-chop;—so the Elizabethan humorist, in his chapter, "How a Gallant should behave himself in an Ordinary," depicts the Paul's captain bragging about the Portugal, Cadiz, or Island voyage, or vaunting his employments in Ireland and the Low Countries, and "publishing his languages" for the benefit of the untravelled listeners; the courtier, with his politic discourse of great lords; and the poet, "after a turn or two in the room, pulling out his gloves, with an epigram, satire, or sonnet fastened in one of them." Thackeray paints not more minutely the affectations and table-habits of our own Club coffee-rooms, than Dekker the humours of the Ordinary, the handling of the tobacco-box, "the whiff," "the ring," and all the other tricks of taking your right Trinidado; the carving, the criticism, and the dicing,—till "the parings of fruit and cheese are in the voider; cards and dice lie stinking in the fire; the guests are all up; the gilt rapiers ready to be hanged; and the French lackey and the Irish footboy shrugging at the doors with their masters' hobby-horses, to ride to the new play."

Have any of our readers ever speculated on the etymology of the word "club," or asked themselves whether it points to the entertainment or the bill? Do we arrive at it by way of the old 'prentice-cry of "Clubs! Clubs!"—in allusion to the good-fellowship of those who "club" together to eat, drink, and be merry; or, as that respectable authority, Skinner, maintains, through the Anglo-Saxon *clifian*, *cleofian* (our "cleave"), from the division of the reckoning among the guests round the table? As *clifian* and its English equivalent include the correlative meanings "to stick together" and "to separate," we may perhaps be allowed to take either view, *pace etymologorum*.

We are not aware of any example earlier than the Restoration of the word being used in the sense of a social gathering. The first "club" we read of is an association, not of roystering Cavaliers, but of sober Puritans. This was the "Rota," or "Coffee Club," as Pepys calls it, which met in New Palace

Yard, "where they take water, the next house to the staires, at one Miles's; where was made purposely a large oval table, with a passage in the middle for Miles to deliver his coffee." Round this table, "in a room every evening as full as it could be crammed" (says Aubrey), sat Milton and Marvell, Cyriac Skinner, Harrington, Nevill, and their friends, discussing abstract political questions, like members of the Union at Oxford and Cambridge. Hither, in January 1660,—the same month in which Monk marched across the Tweed in defiance of the Rump,—came Pepys, and "heard very good discourse in answer to Mr. Harrington's answer, who said that the state of the Roman government was not a settled government; and so it was no wonder the balance of prosperity was in one hand and the command in another, it being therefore always in a posture of war: but it was carried by ballot that it was a steady government, though, it is true, by the voices it had been carried before that it was an unsteady government. So to-morrow it is to be proved by the opponents that the balance lay in one hand, and the government in another." The Clubs we hear of at that time were all political. Besides the Rota, there was the old Royalist club, "the Sealed Knot," which the year before the Restoration had organised a general insurrection in favour of the king. Unluckily, they had a spy among them—Sir Richard Willis—who had long fingered Cromwell's money as one of his private "intelligencers;" and the leaders, on his information, were arrested, and committed to prison. There was the "King Club," all the members of which were called "King." Then there were doubtless Rump Clubs by dozens; and on the other side the Calf's-Head Clubs, which continued into the next century. The flaming Jacobite who wrote the secret history\* of this club in 1703, ascribes its institution to "Milton, and some other creatures of the Commonwealth." But he very likely confounded the Calf's-Head with the Rota. The Calf's-Head Club had no fixed house for meeting, but removed their quarters as they saw convenient. In 1695 their place of assemblage was in a blind alley about Moorfields, where, on the 30th of January in that year, Jerry White, Cromwell's old chaplain, said grace after the anniversary dinner. The cloth removed, a calf's-skull filled with wine was set on the table, and an "anthem" was sung while a brimmer went about to the pious memory of him that killed the tyrant.† "Some

\* Harleian Miscellany, vol. viii.

† See "Toland's Invitation to Dismal to dine with the Calf's-Head Club," published among Swift's poems:

"While an alluding hymn some artist sings,  
We toast 'Confusion to the race of kings.'"

persons that frequent the Black Boy in Newgate Street," says our historian ominously, "know this account to be true." Parties ran high when this was written: Defoe stood in the pillory that year for his pamphlet, *The Shortest Way with Dissenters*. The authorship of "A Calf's-Head Anthem" might have procured the same distinction for Mr. Benjamin Bridgewater, the laureate of the club. The specimens of these lyrics given in the secret history are sorry doggrel enough. In the best of them, alluding to the observance of the day by zealous Royalists as a solemn fast, Benjamin Bridgewater sings:

" They and we this day observing,  
Differ only in one thing :  
They are canting, whining, starving ;  
We, rejoicing, drink and sing.  
Advance the emblem of the action,  
Set the calf's-head full of wine ;  
Drinking ne'er was counted faction,  
Men and gods adore the vine."

While the old party-hates lasted, and bloody retaliation was to be feared, according as Whig or Tory came uppermost, political clubs continued to flourish. Free speech was dangerous in mixed assemblies. Cromwell had introduced the detestable practice of employing paid spies. Spies continued to be employed—though probably they went unpaid—under Charles II. The history of the Popish plots, and the execution of Russell and Sidney, show how little protection was in law. Things were no better under James. Judges were disbenched, bishops sent to the Tower, fellows of colleges expelled, colonels and captains broke, and writers pilloried, for the utterance of opinions adverse to absolute power. The atrocities of Jeffreys, the horrors of the Bloody Assize, can never be forgotten. William was, happily, averse to blood-shedding; and no lives, except those of the men who participated in the assassination-plot, were forfeited for political offences in his reign. For most of the years during which Queen Anne sat on the throne men in high places were traitors at heart, and not likely to punish treason severely in others.

The non-renewal of the Licensing Act in 1694 had released the press from the last restraint of censorship;—indeed, the writers under Anne carried freedom to license. We should hardly have regretted the suppression, even by a licenser, of the detestable filth and profanity of such ribalds as Tom D'Urfey, Tom Brown, and Ned Ward. It is true, we have to thank them for some knowledge of the town; but he that walks under their guidance must pick his way through ordure. They have an unsavoury instinct for dirt; they will go a mile about to roll in it.

The comic writers of the Restoration are immoral enough ; but there is some grace in their most offensive productions. In the works of Brown and Ward all is unredeemed scurrility, obscenity, and blackguardism. There is no good without its accompanying evil. With increasing freedom of opinion and expression, came freer social intercourse. Politics, under Anne, had grown a smaller and less dangerous game than in the preceding century. The original political clubs, of the Commonwealth, the Protectorate, and the Restoration, plotted revolutions of government. The Parliamentary clubs, after the Revolution of 1688, manœuvred for changes of administration. The high-flying Tory, country gentleman and county member, drank the health of the king,—sometimes over the water-decanter,—and flustered himself with bumpers in honour of Dr. Sacheverell and the Church of England, with true-blue spirits of his own kidney, at the October Club. The two hundred squires who, under this name, met at the Bell Tavern, in King Street, Westminster, gave infinite trouble to the Tory administration which came into office under the leadership of Harley, St. John, and Harcourt, in 1710. The administration were for proceeding moderately with their rivals, and for gradually replacing opponents by partisans. The October Club were for immediately impeaching every leader of the Whig party, and for turning out, without a day's grace, every placeman who did not wear their colours and shout their cries. Swift was employed to talk over those of the Club who were amenable to reason ;\* but there were many red-hot "tantivies," for whose tipsy loyalty and hiccupping Anglicanism the October Club was not thorough-going enough. They seceded from the original body, and formed the "March Club,"—more Jacobite, more Anglican, more rampant in its hatred of the Whigs, than the society from which it branched.

The Whig leaders, on their part, had their Club in Shire Lane, at the house of a famous mutton-pieman, one Christopher Katt ; from whom the club, and the pies that formed a standing dish at the club-suppers, both took their name of "Kit-Kat." The portraits of the members were all painted for old Jacob Tonson, the bookseller, and secretary of the club, by Sir Godfrey Kneller, on canvases of a uniform size, 36 inches by 28, since known among portrait-painters as "kit-kat" size.† It is hard to believe, as we pick our way along the narrow and filthy path-

\* There are allusions to such negotiations in more than one passage of the *Journal* for 1711.

† These pictures, forty-two in number, were left by Tonson, at his death, in 1736, to his great-nephew, who died in 1767 ; from whom they passed to his brother's house at Water-Oakley, near Windsor, and subsequently to the house of Mr. Baker, in Hertingfordbury, where, we believe, they still remain.



way of Shire Lane, that in this blind alley, some hundred-and-fifty years ago, used to meet many of the finest gentlemen and choicest wits of the days of Queen Anne and the first George. Inside one of those frowsy and low-ceiled rooms,—now tenanted by abandoned women, or devoted to the sale of greengroceries and small coal,—Halifax has conversed and Somers unbent, Addison mellowed over a bottle, Congreve flashed his wit, Vanbrugh let loose his easy humour, Garth talked and rhymed. The Dukes of Somerset, Richmond, Grafton, Devonshire, Marlborough, and Newcastle; the Earls of Dorset, Sunderland, Manchester, Wharton, and Kingston; Sir Robert Walpole, Granville, Maynwaring, Stepney, and Walsh,\*—all belonged to the Kit-Kat. The Club was literary and gallant, as well as political. The members subscribed four hundred guineas for the encouragement of good comedies, in 1709. Its toasting-glasses, each inscribed with a verse to some "toast"† or reigning beauty of the time, were long famous. The beauties have returned to dust, the glasses are long since shivered; but the verses remain. Among those they celebrate are the four shining daughters of the Duke of Marlborough, — Lady Godolphin, Lady Sunderland, Lady Bridgewater, and Lady Monthermer; Swift's friends, Mrs. Long and Mrs. Barton, the lovely and witty niece of Sir Isaac Newton; the Duchess of Bolton, Mrs. Brudenell, Lady Carlisle, Mrs. Di Kirk, and Lady Wharton.‡ Dr. B. (whoever he may be) celebrates the majestic Bolton:

" Flat contradictions wage in Bolton war,  
Yet her the toasters as a goddess prize;  
Her Whiggish tongue does zealously declare  
For freedom, but for slavery her eyes."

Lord Halifax, as of right, devotes his diamond more than once to Mrs. Barton:

" Beauty and wit strove, each in vain,  
To vanquish Bacchus and his train;  
But Barton, with successful charms,  
From both their quivers drew her arms.  
The roving god his sway resigns,  
And awfully submits his vines."

Mr. Maynwaring neatly insinuates his compliment to Marlborough under cover of this quatrain to his eldest daughter:

\* We take this list from the article "Kit-Kat Club," in Mr. Cunningham's *Handbook to London*, the name of which we have prefixed to this article. To this most accurate and amusing work we have throughout this article resorted so freely, that special acknowledgment of our obligations would be tedious. There is no book extant giving so compendious a history of the capital and its manners.

† The expression dates from the time of the Kit-Kat.

‡ Nichol's Select Collection of Poems, vol. v., 1782. See, too, Lord Halifax's Poems.

“ Godolphin’s easy and unpractised air  
Gains without art, and governs without care.  
Her conquering race with various fates surprise ;  
Who ’scape *their* arms are captive to *her* eyes.”

The society of Queen Anne’s reign groups itself principally under the heads of coffee-house, club, and tavern. The two first were closely allied, but the coffee-house was the elder institution. “The black and bitter drink called coffee,” as Pepys describes it, was introduced into England by Daniel Edwards, a Turkey merchant, in 1657.\* His friends flocked in such numbers to taste the new decoction, that he was compelled, in self-defence, to allow his servant, Pasqua Rosee, a Ragusan,—in partnership with one Bowman, coachman to Mr. Edwards’s brother-in-law,—to set up the first coffee-house opened in London. It stood in St. Michael’s Alley, Cornhill, and bore the sign of Pasqua’s own head. Before 1715, the number of coffee-houses in London was reckoned at two thousand. Every profession, trade, class, party, had its favourite coffee-house. The lawyers discussed law or literature, criticised the last new play, or retailed the freshest Westminster-Hall “bite” at Nando’s or the Grecian, both close on the purlieu of the Temple. Here the young bloods of the Inns of Court paraded their Indian gowns and laced caps of a morning, and swaggered in their laced coats and Mechlin ruffles at night, after the theatre. The cits met to discuss the rise and fall of stocks, and to settle the rate of insurances at Garraway’s or Jonathan’s; the parsons exchanged university gossip, or commented on Dr. Sacheverell’s last sermon at Truby’s or at Child’s in St. Paul’s Churchyard; the soldiers mustered to grumble over their grievances at Old or Young Man’s, near Charing Cross; the St. James’s and the Smyrna were the head-quarters of the Whig politicians, while the Tories frequented the Cocoa-Tree or Ozinda’s, all in St. James’s Street; Scotchmen had their house of call at Forrest’s, Frenchmen at Giles’s or old Slaughter’s in St. Martin’s Lane; the gamesters shook their elbows in White’s, and the Chocolate-houses, round Covent Garden; the *virtuosi* honoured the neighbourhood of Gresham College; and the leading wits gathered at Will’s, Button’s, or Tom’s, in Great Russell Street, where after the theatre, was playing at piquet and the best of conversation till midnight. At all these places, except a few of the most aristocratic coffee or chocolate-houses of the West End, smoking was allowed. A penny was laid down at the bar on entering, and the price of a dish of tea or coffee seems to have been twopence: this charge covered newspapers and lights. The established frequenters of the house had their

\* D’Israeli (*Curiosities of Literature*) says 1652.

regular seats, and special attention from the fair lady at the bar and the tea or coffee boys. Mr. Ironside designs to begin his exact character of all the politicians who frequent any of the coffee-houses from St. James's to the 'Change by "that cluster of wise-heads, as they are found sitting every evening from the left side of the Smyrna to the door." Dryden's winter-chair by the fire, and his summer-chair on the balcony, at Will's, should be remembered by all who pass under the windows of No. 1, Bow Street, on the west side. One loves to picture the glorious old man on his throne, under a bright summer sunset, with the brilliant young wits about him, proud of the honour of dipping a finger and thumb into his snuffbox. It was at Button's, on the south side of Russell Street, about two doors from Covent Garden, "over against Tom's," that Ambrose Phillips hung up the birch-rod meant for the chastisement of Alexander Pope. This house was Addison's headquarters, as Will's had been John Dryden's. Here Captain Steele set up the Lion's Head, to receive contributions for the *Guardian*. To these coffee-houses men of all classes, who had either leisure or money, resorted to spend both; and in them politics, play, scandal, criticism, and business, went on hand in hand. The transition from coffee-house to club was easy. Thus Tom's (one of the haunts of the wits), a coffee-house till 1764, in that year, by a guinea subscription\* among nearly seven hundred of the nobility, foreign ministers, gentry, and geniuses of the age, became the card-room and place of meeting for the subscribers exclusively. In the same way, doubtless, White's and the Cocoa-Tree changed their character from chocolate-house to club, the former about 1736, the latter several years later. When once a house had customers enough of standing and good repute, and acquainted with each other, it was quite worth while,—considering the characters who, on the strength of assurance, tolerable manners, and a laced coat, often got a footing in these houses while they continued open to the public,—to purchase the power of excluding all but subscribers. When M'Lean and Plunket, two dashing highwaymen, were taken in 1750, Horace Walpole writes, "M'Lean had a lodging in St. James's Street, over against White's, and another at Chelsea; Plunket one in Jermyn Street; and their faces are as known about St. James's as any gentleman's who lives in that quarter, who perhaps goes upon the road too." We all remember the figure of the highwayman, in Hogarth's gambling scene at White's, with the pistols peeping out of his pocket, waiting by the fireside till the

\* William Till, *Descriptive Particulars of English Coronation-Medals* (quoted by Mr. Cunningham).

heaviest winner takes his departure, in order to "recoup" himself of his losings.\* The conversion of chocolate-house into club was, moreover, the best protection against foul play. Wherever there is public gambling, there will be rooks as well as pigeons. The "knights of the industry" in that day were masters of their craft. "Considering," says Puckle, "the combinations of gamesters; their tricks to make their bubbles drunk, very drunk, and then to put upon them the doctors, the fulloms, loaded dice, flats, bars, cuts, high-slipped, low-slipped, chain dice, † &c.; . . . . . that besides false dice, there are several sorts of false boxes; . . . . . that, supposing both box and dice fair, gamesters have the top-peep, eclipse, thumbing, &c.; ‡ . . . . . that by long practice, sharpers can, from conveniences in pockets, caps, sleeves, rolls of stockings, &c., change cards and dice with a *deceptio visus* as nimbly as jugglers water from cup to cup;— . . . . . how strangely infatuated are men, who, simply committing their gains to mere chance, throw away their estates, and entail want upon their issue!" But however bad might be the gambling under Queen Anne and George I. in the public chocolate-houses of St. James's Street or Covent Garden,—we shall see it grow infinitely worse during the sober reign of George III. in the aristocratic clubs, where the exclusion of professional black-legs seems only to have made the stakes higher and the players more desperate. Steele, who had no doubt bled but too freely, devoted many numbers of the *Tatler* to the exposure of these chocolate-house sharpers, and ran no slight risk of assassination from some of the Aces and Cutters he showed up. But Honest Dick was known to be a master of his weapon, and a true Irishman in his defiance of danger; so he carried home his skinful of claret unpinked from many a heavy bout at Button's with Addison, Brett, and Budgell, to poor Mrs. Steele in Bury Street.

To understand the large part which club and coffee-house filled in the life of those days, we have but to refer to those delightful essays which have helped to make the times of Queen Anne almost as familiar to us as our own. Who does not remember the Ugly Club; the Everlasting Club; the Club of She Romps (bless them!); the Parish Clerks' and Lawyers' Clubs; and above all, the Spectator's own Club,—with that most lovable personage of all fiction, dear, honest, simple, kindly Sir Roger de Coverley, for its central figure? Steele and Addison were

\* "Ha'n't I seen your face at White's?" asks Aimwell of Gibbet in the *Beaux Stratagem*. "Ay, and at Will's too," is the highwayman's answer.

† All slang names of various kinds of loaded or "faked" dice, made to throw particular combinations of numbers only.

‡ Different modes of "securing" the dice in the box, so as to make them fall at the caster's will.

confirmed club-men, tavern-haunters, and coffee-house gossips Mrs. Steele, it is to be feared, had but little of her Dick's company at any time. The tavern in Kensington is still standing to which Addison used to steal away from the grandeur of Holland House, and the society of his countess, to enjoy a solitary bottle and muse over old times. It was just after Queen Anne's accession that Swift made acquaintance with the leaders of the wits at Button's. Ambrose Phillips has told the story of the strange clergyman whom the frequenters of the coffee-house had observed for some days. He knew no one, no one knew him. He would lay his hat down on a table, and walk up and down at a brisk pace for half-an-hour without speaking to any one, or seeming to pay attention to any thing that was going forward. Then he would snatch up his hat, pay his money at the bar, and walk off, without having opened his lips. The frequenters of the room had christened him "the mad parson." One evening, as Mr. Addison and the rest were observing him, they saw him cast his eyes several times upon a gentleman in boots, who seemed to be just come out of the country. At last Swift advanced towards this bucolic gentleman as if intending to address him. They were all eager to hear what the dumb parson had to say, and immediately quitted their seats to get near him. Swift went up to the country gentleman; and in a very abrupt manner, without any previous salute, asked him, "Pray, sir, do you know any good weather in the world?" After staring a little at the singularity of Swift's manner and the oddity of the question, the gentleman answered, "Yes, sir, I thank God I remember a great deal of good weather in my time." "That is more," said Swift, "than I can say: I never remember any weather that was not too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry; but, however God Almighty contrives it, at the end of the year 'tis all very well."\*

There was surely something in this *début* ominous of Swift's terrible ending,—“dead at the top,” as he said, comparing himself to the blasted tree. In his *Journal to Stella*, we see the upward progress of Swift, from the coffee-house and tavern to dinners with my Lord-Treasurer, and suppers with Mr. Secretary, where he chooses his own company. By 1711 he had grown cool to his old Whig friends Steele and Addison,—much to his regret as far as the latter was concerned,—and was a stranger at the St. James's, always a Whig house. “I think I have altered for the better,” he writes to Stella in May of that year. In fact, he was now the foremost pamphleteer and most trusted counsellor of the Tory administration. But Whig or Tory, he was always “clubable.” “I went in the evening to

\* Sheridan's Life of Swift.

see Mr. Harley," he writes, May 5, 1711; "and, upon my word, I was in perfect joy. Mr. Secretary was just going out of the door; but I made him come back; and there was the old Saturday Club,—Lord-Keeper, Lord Rivers, Mr. Secretary, Mr. Harley, and I." This was the same club to which he refers in January 1713: "I dined with Lord-Treasurer, and shall again to-morrow, which is his day when all the ministers dine with him. He calls it whipping day. It is always on Saturday; and we do indeed usually rally him about his faults on that day. I was of the original club, when only poor Lord Rivers, Lord-Keeper, and Lord Bolingbroke came; but now Ormond, Anglesey, Lord-Steward, Dartmouth, and other rabble intrude, and I scold at it; but now they pretend as good a title as I; and, indeed, many Saturdays I am not there. The company being too many, I don't love it." In this same year, he was intrusted with the duty of framing the rules of the Brothers' Club. On the 21st June 1711, he informs Stella, "I went at noon to see Mr. Secretary at his office, and there was Lord-Treasurer; so I killed two birds, and we were glad to see one another, and so forth, &c. And the Secretary and I dined at Sir William Wyndham's, who married Lady Catherine Seymour, your acquaintance, I suppose. There were ten of us at dinner. It seems in my absence they had erected a club, and made me one; and we made some laws to-day, which I am to digest and add to against next meeting. Our meetings are to be every Thursday. We are yet but twelve. Lord-Keeper and Lord-Treasurer were proposed; but I was against them, and so was Mr. Secretary, though their sons are of it: and so they are excluded; but we design to admit the Duke of Shrewsbury. The end of our club is, to advance conversation and friendship, and to reward deserving persons with our interest and recommendation. We take in none but men of wit or men of interest; and if we go on as we began, no other club in this town will be worth talking of." Afterwards, however, he prefers to call "the Brothers" a society, and not a club. The journal about this time is very full of brothers Arran and Dupplin, Masham and Ormond, Bathurst and Harcourt, Orrery and Jack Hill, and other Tory magnates of the society. Swift was now in the heyday of his influence.\* "I was at court and

\* Dr. Kennet's *Diary* gives us an amusing picture of Swift's self-importance: "1713. Dr. Swift came into the coffee-house, and had a bow from every body but me. When I came to the antechamber to wait before prayers, Dr. Swift was the principal man of talk and business, and acted as a master of requests. He was soliciting the Earl of Arran to speak to his brother the Duke of Ormond to get a chaplain's place established in the garrison of Hull for Mr. Fiddes, a clergyman in that neighbourhood, who had lately been in gaol, and published sermons to pay fees. He was promising Mr. Thorold to undertake with my Lord-Treasurer that, according to his petition, he should obtain a salary of 200*l.* per annum as

church to-day, as I was this day se'nnight," he tells Stella. "I generally am acquainted with about thirty in the drawing-room; and am so proud, I make all the lords come up to me. One passes half-an-hour pleasant enough." No doubt of that. Very pleasant, too, he found it, entertaining his "brothers" at the Thatched House Tavern,\* at the cost of seven good guineas;—he has almost a mind to send Stella the bill. "We were but eleven to-day," he writes to her (February 1712). "We are now, in all, nine lords and ten commoners. The Duke of Beaufort had the confidence to propose his brother-in-law, the Earl of Danby, to be a member; but I opposed it so warmly that it was waved. Danby is not above twenty, and we will have no more boys; and we want but two to make up our number. I stayed till eight, and then we all went away soberly. The Duke of Ormond's treat last week cost 20*l.*, though it was only four dishes, and four without a dessert; and I bespoke it in order to be cheap. Yet I could not prevail to change the house. Lord-Treasurer is in a rage with us for being so extravagant; and the wine was not reckoned neither, for that is always brought by him that is president." Afterwards they shifted their dinners from the Thatched House to the Star and Garter "on the Pall Mall." One day President Arbuthnot gives the society a dinner dressed in the queen's kitchen, mighty fine. "We eat it in Ozinda's coffee-house, just by St. James's. We were never merrier or better company, and did not part till after eleven." In May, we hear "how fifteen of our society dined together under a canopy in an arbour at Parson's Green last Thursday. I never saw any thing so fine and romantic." Beside political "squibbing" one object of the Brothers was, to buy over pens and partisans for the ministry. "Our society

minister of the English Church at Rotterdam. He stopped F. Gwynne, Esq. going in with the red bag to the Queen, and told him aloud he had something to say to him from my Lord-Treasurer. He talked with the son of Dr. Davenant to be sent abroad; and took out his pocket-book, and wrote down several things, as *memoranda*, to do for him. He turned to the fire, and took out his gold watch; and, telling him the time of the day, complained it was very late. A gentleman said 'he was too fast.' 'How can I help it,' says the doctor, 'if the courtiers give me a watch that won't go right?' Then he instructed a young nobleman that the best poet in England was Mr. Pope (a Papist), who had begun a translation of Homer into English verse, for which 'he must have them all subscribe; for,' says he, 'the author *shall not* begin to print till *I have* a thousand guineas for him. Lord-Treasurer, after leaving the Queen, came through the room, beckoning Dr. Swift to follow him. Both went off just before prayers."

\* "I called at noon at Mrs. Masham's, who desired me not to let 'The Prophecy' be published for fear of angering the Queen about the Duchess of Somerset: so I went to the printer to stop them." *Journal*, Dec. 24.—*Ibid.* Dec. 26: "I entertained our society at the Thatched House Tavern. The printer had not received my letter, and so brought us a dozen copies of 'The Prophecy;' but I ordered him to part with no more. It is an admirable good one, and people are mad for it."

does not meet now, as usual; for which I am blamed"—he writes in 1713—"but till Lord-Treasurer will agree to give us money and employments to bestow, I am averse to it; and he gives us nothing but promises." "We now resolve to meet but once a fortnight, and have a committee every other week of six or seven to consult about doing *some good*. I proposed another message to Lord-Treasurer by three principal members, to give a hundred guineas to a certain person; and they are to urge it as well as they can." Was this certain person an author in distress, or a Whig pamphleteer to be bought over? Perhaps both characters may have concurred. Corruption in those days too often did the work of charity. They were strange times, when Harrison the secretary of embassy who brought over the Barrier Treaty from Utrecht,—“my own creature,” as Swift calls him,—with a salary of 1000*l.* a-year, of which not a farthing was paid him, confessed to Swift he had not a penny in his pocket to pay for the coach which the doctor found waiting for him, “and intended to borrow the money some way or other.” This Harrison was a *protégé* of Swift’s, who describes him, in 1710, as “a young fellow we are all fond of, and about a year or two come from the university; a little pretty fellow, with a great deal of wit, good sense, and good-nature.” He was then governor to one of the Duke of Queensberry’s sons, at forty pounds a-year; which was all he had to live on. Swift interfered between him and the thoughtless extravagance of the men-about-town with whom he associated, set him up “as a new Tatler,” corrected his first essays, found him a printer, and in 1711 procured him the appointment of secretary at the Hague, when Mr. St. John made him a present of fifty guineas to bear his charges. Less than two years had elapsed,—on the 11th of February 1713, Swift, returning from a dinner with the Brothers at Jack Hill’s (at which Swift gave the club an account of sixty guineas he had collected to give away to two authors the next day, and at which the Lord-Treasurer promised him 100*l.* to reward some others), found on his table a letter to tell him poor little Harrison was ill, and desired to see him. He went in the morning, found him suffering from fever and inflammation in the lungs, harassed and penniless; got thirty guineas for him from Lord Bolingbroke, and an order on the Treasury for 100*l.* of his arrears of salary, and removed him to Knightsbridge for the air. In his journal of the 14th he writes: “I took Parnell this morning, and we walked to see poor Harrison. I had the hundred pounds in my pocket. I told Parnell I was afraid to knock at the door. My mind misgave me. I knocked; and his man, in tears, told me his master was dead an hour



before. Think what grief this is to me ! I went to his mother, and have been ordering things for his funeral with as little cost as possible, to-morrow at ten at night. Lord-Treasurer was much concerned when I told him. I would not dine with Lord-Treasurer, nor any where else ; but got a bit of meat towards evening. No loss ever grieved me so much : poor creature !”

Only the day before he had been to see “a poor poet, one Mr. Diaper,\* in a nasty garret, very sick ;” and had given him twenty guineas from Lord Bolingbroke. Mr. Thackeray, in his *Lectures on the English Humorists*, deals savagely with Swift. He talks of his bitterness, scorn, rage, and subsequent misanthropy. It would be well, when we read that lecture, to remember such acts of Swift’s as these to Harrison and Diaper, or as this deed without a name from the journal of March 30, 1713 : “I was naming some time ago to a certain person another certain person that was very deserving and poor and sickly ; and the other, that first certain person, gave me 100*l.* to give the other, which I have not yet done. The person who is to have it never saw the giver, nor expects one farthing, nor has the least knowledge or imagination of it ; so I believe it will be a very agreeable surprise.”

Surely the man who would thus enjoy in anticipation a kind action done to an entire stranger had more goodness in his nature than Mr. Thackeray allows to Swift.

The printer regularly attended the dinners of “the Brothers.”† At one dinner we learn how the Chancellor of the Exchequer sent Mr. Adisworth, the author of the *Examiner*, twenty guineas.

One of the best-beloved of “the Brothers” was Colonel—or, as he was commonly called, “Duke”—Disney : “a fellow of abundance of humour,” says Swift, writing to Stella in 1713 ; “an old battered rake, but very honest : not an old man, but an old rake. It was he that said of Jenny Kingdom, the maid-of-honour, who is a little old, ‘that since she could not get a

\* “The author of the *Sea Eclogues*, poems of mermen, resembling pastorals and shepherds ; and they are very pretty ; and the thought is new. . . I think to recommend him to our society to-morrow. P— on him ! I must do something for him, and get him out of the way. I hate to have any new wits rise ; but when they do rise, I would encourage them ; but they tread on our heels, and thrust us off the stage.” *Journal to Stella*, March 2, 1713.

† “There was printed a Grub-Street speech of Lord Nottingham, and he was such an owl to complain of it in the House of Lords, who have taken up the printer for it. I heard at Court that Walpole (a great Whig member) said that I and my whimsical club writ it at one of our meetings, and that I should pay for it. He will find he lies : and I shall let him know by a third hand my thoughts of him.” *Journal to Stella*, Dec. 18, 1711.

“To-day I published ‘The Fable of Midas,’ a poem printed on a loose half-sheet of paper. I know not how it will take ; but it passed wonderfully at our society to-night.” *Journal to Stella*, Feb. 14, 1711-12.

husband, the queen should give her brevet to act as a married woman.” The journal to Stella closes in June 1713, leaving Swift, Dean of St. Patrick’s, at Chester, on his way to Holyhead. Next year he was again in London, and had formed, with Arbuthnot, Pope, and Gay, the “Scriblerus Club,” to which the world owes those most humorous fragments of satire on human learning which go under the name of the erudite Martinus,—*The Memoirs of P. P., Clerk of the Parish*, written in ridicule of *Burnet’s History of his own Times*, and perhaps the germs of *Gulliver*. The dispersion of the club prevented the completion of Scriblerus, and robbed the world of much notable humour.

So completely during the first quarter of the last century had society organised itself into clubs, that the *Spectator* tells us of “Street Clubs” formed by the inhabitants of the same street. The social qualities of the Street Club were considered as an element in determining the desirableness of lodgings. It is true, that the streets were so unsafe, that the nearer home a man’s club lay, the better for his clothes and his purse. Even riders in coaches were not safe from mounted footpads, and from the danger of upsets in the huge ruts and pits which intersected the streets. The passenger who could not afford a coach, had to pick his way, after dark, along the dimly-lighted ill-paved thoroughfares, seamed by filthy open kennels, besprinkled from projecting spouts, bordered by gaping cellars, guarded by feeble old watchmen, and beset with daring street-robbers. But there were worse terrors of the night than the chances of a splashing or a sprain,—risks beyond those of an interrogatory by the watch, or of a “stand and deliver” from a footpad. As Gay sings in his *Trivia* :

“ Now is the time that rakes their revels keep ;  
 Kindlers of riot, enemies of sleep.  
 His scattered pence the flying Nicker flings,  
 And with the copper-shower the casement rings.  
 Who has not heard the Scowrer’s midnight fame ?  
 Who has not trembled at the Mohock’s name ?  
 Was there a watchman took his hourly rounds  
 Safe from their blows, or new-invented wounds ?  
 I pass their desperate deeds and mischiefs, done  
 Where from Snow Hill black steepy torrents run ;  
 How matrons, hooped within the hogshead’s womb,  
 Were tumbled furious thence ; the rolling tomb  
 O’er the stones thunders, bounds from side to side :  
 So Regulus, to save his country, died.”

It was no imaginary danger that convoked the lusty escort which attended Sir Roger de Coverley from his lodgings in Norfolk Street to the playhouse, and back again from the play-

house to his lodgings. Imagine, in these days of prompt policemen, rapid cabs, and unceremonious broughams, the good knight solemnly rolling towards Covent Garden in Captain Sentry's antediluvian coach, the fore-wheels new mended, with Mr. Spectator on his left, the captain before him, his Steinkirk sword by his side, and in the rear Sir Roger's faithful butler at the head of a troop of stalwart footmen, armed with "good oaken plants." Sir Roger, we are told, had thought himself fallen into the hands of the Mohocks but the night before. These Mohocks must not be omitted from any record of London Clubs. They were a society formed by young rakehells of the town,—successors to the "Muns" and "Tityre-tus" of the Restoration—when "a man could not go from the Rose Tavern to the Piazza once, but he must venture his life twice"—and the "Hectors" and "Scourers," who inherited the follies of the wild bloods in King Charles's merry days. The Hawkabites were a society of the same kidney; as were "the Pinkindindies" in Dublin. The *Spectator* tells us that the president of this nocturnal club was called "the Emperor of the Mohocks," and wore as his badge of office "a crescent, in a very extraordinary manner engraven upon his forehead." The avowed design of the institution was mischief; and the only qualification required in its members was, an outrageous ambition of doing all possible hurt to their fellow-creatures. After drinking themselves mad, these pleasant fellows would sally forth, knock down, stab, cut, and carbonado all peaceful passengers they could overtake. They had special barbarities, with peculiar names for them. "Tipping the lion" was squeezing the nose flat to the face, and boring out the eyes with the fingers.\* "Dancing-masters" were those "who taught their scholars to cut capers by running swords through their legs." "The Tumblers" amused themselves by setting women on their heads, and worse indecencies. "The Sweaters" worked in parties of half-a-dozen, surrounding their victims with the points of their swords; which done, the Sweater towards whom the patient was so rude as to turn his back pricked him in "that part whereon schoolboys are punished;" and as he veered round from the smart, each Sweater repeated this pinking operation. "After this jig has gone two or three times round, and the patient is thought to have sweat sufficiently, he is very handsomely rubbed down by some attendants, who carry with them instruments for that purpose—('oaken towels,' we presume)—and so discharged."†

\* It is plain "gouging" is not of Transatlantic invention.

† Swift half-doubted of the danger, yet went in some apprehension of these gentlemen. He writes, just at the date of these *Spectators*, "Here is the devil and all to do with these Mohocks. Grub-Street papers about them fly like lightning, and a list printed of near eighty put into several prisons, and all a lie;

A royal proclamation against the Mohocks was issued on the 18th of March 1712. This blackguardism was not short-lived. It had originated with the Restoration. It continued till nearly the end of George I.'s reign. Smollett attributes the peculiar profaneness and profligacy of that period to the demoralisation produced by the South-Sea bubble. The successors of the Mohocks added blasphemy to riot. In 1721 an order in council was issued "for the suppression of blaspheming clubs." Peculiarly distinguished among these clubs for the rampancy of its debauchery and the daring of its wickedness was "the Hell-fire Club," of which the Duke of Wharton (Pope's duke)\* was one of the leading spirits. So high did the tide of profaneness run at this time, that a bill was brought into the House of Lords for its suppression. It was in the debate on this bill that the Earl of Peterborough declared, that though he was for a Parliamentary king, he was against a Parliamentary religion; and that the Duke of Wharton pulled an old family Bible out of his pocket, in order to controvert certain arguments delivered from the episcopal bench.

Mordaunt Earl of Peterborough,—the friend of Pope, the

and I begin to think there is no truth, or very little, in the whole story. He that abused Davenant was a drunken gentleman; none of that gang. My man tells me that one of the lodgers heard in a coffee-house, publicly, that one design of the Mohocks was upon me, if they could catch me; and though I believe nothing of it, I forbear walking late; and they have put me to the charge of some shillings already." *Journal to Stella*, March 12, 1712.

\* "Wharton, the scorn and wonder of our days,  
Whose ruling passion was the lust of praise,  
Born with whate'er could win it from the wise,  
Women and fools must like him, or he dies.  
Though wondering senates hung on all he spoke,  
The club must hail him master of the joke.  
Shall parts so various aim at nothing new?  
Here shine a Tully and a Wilmot too;  
That turns repentant, and his God adores  
With the same spirit that he drinks and whores:  
Enough if all around him but admire,  
And now the beast appeared, and now the friar.  
Thus with each gift of nature and of art,  
And wanting nothing but an honest heart,  
Grown all to all; from no one vice exempt,  
And most contemptible to shun contempt;  
His passion still to covet general praise,  
His life to forfeit it a thousand ways;  
A constant bounty, which no friend has made;  
An angel tongue, which no man can persuade.  
A fool, with more of thought than half mankind;  
Too rash for thought, for action too refined;  
A tyrant to the wife his heart approves,  
A rebel to the very thing he loves,—  
He dies, an outcast of each church and state,  
And, harder still, flagitious, yet not great.  
Ask you why Wharton broke through every rule?  
'Twas all for fear that knaves should call him fool."

Mordanto\* of Swift, that most meteoric of commanders and versatile of men,—in conjunction with Rich, the celebrated harlequin and patentee of Covent Garden Theatre, founded, in 1735, the sublime Society of Beefsteaks. We ought, perhaps, to apologise to the Society for introducing their name into an article on London Clubs, for they disclaim the appellation of "club." But however heretical it may appear, we cannot consent to dissever the Society from that earlier Beefsteak Club to which honest Dick Estcourt, the greatest mimic—and one of the pleasantest companions as well as kindest hearts—of his time, was *provedore*. Steele loved him; and has recorded his death, as only a kindred spirit could, in a *Spectator*, which leaves one in doubt whether one loves the writer or the subject of it best. Honest Downes, the prompter, calls Estcourt *histrionatus*. "He has the honour (nature endowing him with an easy, free, unaffected mode of elocution) in comedy always to *latificate* his audience, especially the quality." *Latificate* is a good phrase. No doubt he *latificated* the customers, who were his companions too, at the Rummer, in Covent Garden, which he opened about a year before his death; thereby, as Tom Davies sagely remarks, "enlarging his acquaintance, while he shortened his days." In his peculiarly *latificating* character of *provedore* to the Beefsteak Club, "composed of the chief wits and greatest men of the nation," Tom Davies describes Estcourt as wearing their badge, which was a small gridiron of gold, hung about his neck with a green-silk ribbon. The Duke of Marlborough did not disdain to eat many a steak in Dick Estcourt's pleasant company, and was probably a member of the club. To the Beefsteak Club facetious Dr. King dedicates his *Art of Cookery*, written (1709) in imitation of Horace's *Art of Poetry*. In this poem he has celebrated Dick Estcourt and the steaks, and Brawn, cook at the Rummer, in a style equally creditable to host, club, cook, and poet:

- "Mordanto fills the trump of fame ;  
The Christian world his deeds proclaim ;  
And prints are crowded with his name.  
In journeys he outrides the post ;  
Sits up till midnight with his host ;  
Talks politics, and gives the toast.  
A skeleton in outward figure ;  
His meagre corpse, though full of vigour,  
Would halt behind him, were it bigger.  
So wonderful his expedition,  
When you have not the least suspicion,  
He's with you, like an apparition :  
Shines in all climates like a star ;  
In senates bold, and fierce in war :  
A land-commandant and a tar."

“ He that of honour, wit, and mirth partakes,  
 May be a fit companion o'er beefsteaks ;  
 His name may be to future times enrolled  
 In Estcourt's book, whose gridiron's fram'd of gold.”

The original Beefsteak Club has one especial distinction. So far as we know, it is the only London Club that ever enrolled a lady on its list. Peg Woffington, perhaps in tribute to the perfect grace with which she wore the breeches in Sir Harry Wildair, was an honorary member of the Beefsteak Club. We have already said, that we feel disposed to suspect a connection between the Society of Steaks and this, the original Beefsteak Club.\* Even the Society's motto, “Steaks and liberty,” we can scarcely call original: beef and liberty have always gone hand in hand. There was a political club in hot opposition to Sir Robert Walpole, in 1733-4, called the “Rumpsteak” or “Liberty” Club. The Society of Steaks, however, consider themselves as autochthons of Covent Garden, and refer their own rise to the date 1735, three years after the theatre had been opened by John Rich. That ingenious actor and manager, in 1732, had left for Covent Garden the playhouse in Lincoln's-Inn Fields, with his pockets replenished by the success of the *Beggars' Opera*, which had “made Gay rich and Rich gay,” in the season of 1727. Rich introduced pantomime into this country, and was himself the greatest of Harlequins, which part he performed under the name of “Lun.” Garrick says of him, in one of his prologues,

“ When Lun appeared, with matchless art and whim,  
 He gave the power of speech to every limb ;  
 Though masked and mute, conveyed his true intent,  
 And told in frolic gestures what he meant.”

Rich was in the habit of arranging the comic business, and constructing the models of tricks, for his pantomimes, in his private room at the theatre. Lord Peterborough, as an appreciator of all forms of talent, was an acquaintance of his, and used to visit him at his work. Who shall say that he did not invent some of Rich's most wonderful tricks and transformations; perhaps, old as he then was, devise for Harlequin some peculiarly daring leap, or altogether original “animation business”? One Saturday, while Lord Peterborough was on such a visit, Rich's dinner-hour, two o'clock, arrived. Harlequins must be early diners. Rich began to lay his cloth, and to set on the gridiron for his own meal. Who was ever proof against the seductive

\* To this connection we attribute what we must otherwise class as an inaccuracy, in Mr. Cunningham's article “Beefsteak Club,” p. 451, where he inserts under that head two extracts, one from the *Connoisseur* for 1754, the other from a letter of Churchill to Wilkes, which both refer undoubtedly to the Society of Beefsteaks.

fragrance of a rumpsteak? Can we wonder that the sympathetic earl should have been tempted; that Harlequin by a wave of his wand should have converted "steak for one" into "steak for two," and called up a bottle of sound port from that magic bin, of which his own sword may have been whilom one of the laths? We all know the exquisite charm of such impromptus. So heartily did the earl enjoy Harlequin's steak and company, that an engagement was made for a similar entertainment the next Saturday, when the earl undertook to bring a friend or two. And so grew up the Saturday dinner of the sublime Society of Steaks.\* Rich's gridiron luckily escaped, when Handel's original scores, the choice cellar of the Society, and its archives of good things said and sung, perished in the fire which laid Covent Garden low in 1808. Encircled with its motto, "Beef and liberty," that sacred gridiron—on which was broiled that father of all steaks, whereon dined the greatest of harlequins and the most dazzling of captains, on that memorable Saturday in 1735—still hangs from the ceiling of the Society's dining-room. This was at the top of Covent Garden Theatre till the catastrophe of 1808. The Society then migrated to the Bedford in the Piazza, and finally removed to their present *sanctum*, within the walls of the Lyceum theatre. In this room, described by Mr. Cunningham "as a little Escorial† in itself, with doors, wainscoting, and roof of good old English oak, ornamented with gridirons as thick as Henry VII.'s chapel with the portcullis of the founder," feed the sublime Society, every Saturday, from November till the end of June, on steaks—nothing but steaks. Such steaks! You eat them hot from the gridiron; and through a grating, itself a gridiron, you see the cooks plying their office. Over the grating you may read,

"If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly."

The liquors are limited in quality to port and punch, in quantity unlimited. The club-button bears the club-blazon,—a gridiron *fumant, odorant*. Song, give-and-take jest,—not always of the smoothest,—and fun,—the more rampant the welcomer,—follow the feast of steaks. There must have been something native to the heart of John Bull in "the Steaks;" for the Society still flourishes. The simple strength of the

\* Edwards, in his *Anecdotes of Painting*, ascribes the origin of the "Steaks" to Lambert, the scene-painter of Covent Garden; our account, we believe, is more consonant with the "Steaks'" tradition. Perhaps Lambert was of the first party. Nothing can be more probable than that the scene-painter should have been closeted with the manager on such a business as the bringing out of a pantomime.

† Which gloomy palace, our readers will remember, is said to have been built on the model of St. Lawrence's gridiron.

sole viand, the soundness of the solitary wine, the unaffected heartiness of the post-prandial mirth, are all English. Bubb Doddington, Aaron Hill, Hoadley, the author of the *Suspicious Husband*, Leonidas Glover, The Colmans, Garrick, John Beard, the singer, its jolly president in 1784, are among the early celebrities of the Society. It was to "the Steaks" that Wilkes sent a copy of his infamous *Essay on Woman* (first printed for private circulation); for which Lord Sandwich—Jemmy Twitcher,—himself a member of the Society—moved in the House of Lords that Wilkes should be taken into custody. This was surely fouler treason, as the act of one brother of the Steaks against another, than even the trick of "dirty Kidgel," the clergyman, who, as a friend of the author, got a copy of the essay from the printer, and then felt it his duty to denounce the publication. But in this matter Jemmy Twitcher out-Sandwiched himself; for Walpole tells us he was himself expelled for blasphemy by the Steaks the same year he assailed Wilkes for the *Essay on Woman*. The grossness and blasphemy of the poem disgusted the Society; and Wilkes never dined there after 1763. When he went to France, however, he was made an honorary member. Churchill was introduced into the Society by his friend Wilkes: but his irregularities were too much for even that not most regular of companies; and his desertion of his wife created such a storm against him, that he soon found he must choose between resignation and expulsion. He resigned; but never forgave Lord Sandwich, to whom he attributed his forced retirement. Churchill's satire is not perfect enough in form to keep it alive, in spite of fleeting topics and temporary notorieties; but the lines in which he holds Sandwich up to scorn are not unworthy of Pope's most vigorous successor.\* Garrick was an honoured member of the Steaks. Perhaps the hat and sword now among the *insignia* of the club were the identical ones he wore that night, when, announced for "Ranger" at Drury Lane, he lingered at the club so long, that the pit began to growl and the gallery to ring with the ominous call of, "Manager, manager!" Garrick had been sent for to Covent Garden, where the Steaks then dined. Carriages blocked up Russell Street, and detained

\* "From his youth upwards to the present day,  
 When vices more than years have made him gray;  
 When riotous excess with wasteful hand  
 Shakes life's frail glass, and hastes each ebbing sand;  
 Unmindful from what stock he drew his birth,  
 Untainted with one deed of real worth,—  
 Lothario, holding honour at no price,  
 Folly to folly added, vice to vice,  
 Wrought sin with greediness, and courted shame  
 With greater zeal than good men seek for fame."



him at the crossing. When he reached the theatre, he found Dr. Ford, one of the patentees, walking up and down in anxiety. As Garrick came panting in, "I think, David," said Ford, "considering the stake you and I have in this house, you might pay more attention to its business." "True, my good friend," returned Garrick; "but I was thinking of my steak in the other house." The number of the Steaks was increased from twenty-four to twenty-five in 1785, to admit the Prince of Wales Arthur Murphy, the dramatist and translator of Tacitus, John Kemble, the Dukes of Clarence and of Sussex, were leading figures in their day. The Duke of Norfolk, equally celebrated for the girth of his paunch and the latitude of his political opinions, was the Silenus of the Beefsteak Bacchanalia. He used to eat his dish of fish in the Piazza Tavern hard by, before falling to on his meal of steaks, his consumption of which did not belie the promise of his appearance. Charles Morris was the laureate-lyrist of the Steaks. Two volumes of his songs were published in 1840. They are good specimens of their not particularly valuable class, mingling after-dinner hilarity with vinous sentiment,—the one about as genuine as the other,—in a sufficiently fluent style. The *Reasons for Drinking* is the best of his songs.\* One or two of the stanzas have even a ring of genuine feeling. Besides the functions of bard, Captain Morris in his time discharged the high and onerous duty of punch-maker at the sideboard. Lord Brougham, among other parts well filled in his versatile life, was an excellent member of the sublime Society of Steaks, and a most gleeful gladiator in its wit-combats. William Linley (Sheridan's "brother Hozy") was for many years a butt of the Club. Dick Wilson, Eldon's port-wine-loving secretary, deserves to be mentioned, as a member, for the singularity of his fortunes. He was first steward and solicitor, and afterwards residuary legatee, of Lord Chedworth. He is said to have owed the favour of this eccentric nobleman to the legal acumen he displayed at a Richmond water-party. A pleasant lawn, under a spreading beech-tree, in one of Mr. Cambridge's meadows, was selected for the dinner; but on pulling to the shore, behold a board in the tree proclaiming, "All persons landing and dining here will be prosecuted according to law!" Dick Wilson contended that the prohibition clearly applied only to the joint act of "landing and dining" at the particular spot. If the party landed a few yards lower down, and then dined under the tree, only one member of the condition would be

\* Captain Morris lived to nearly ninety, and appeared for the last time at the Steaks in 1835, when the Society presented him with a handsome silver bowl, and he acknowledged the honour in a kindly stave—his last churrup, poor old boy!

broken ; which would be no legal infringement, as the prohibition—being of two acts, linked by a copulative—was not severable. This astute argument carried the day. The party dined under Mr. Cambridge's beech-tree, and it is presumed were not "prosecuted according to law." At all events, Lord Chedworth, who was one of the diners, was so charmed with Dick's ready application of his law to practice, that he engaged him in the management of his large and accumulating property, of which, as we have said, Dick was ultimately left residuary legatee. His landed estates Lord Chedworth bequeathed to his apothecary. The will was disputed ; but the sanity of the testator was maintained, even in the face of such gifts to his lawyer and his doctor. The will was of a piece with the oddity of the testator's life. Under the burden of an unjust accusation, Lord Chedworth had secluded himself from society, and spent his days in a small house in Ipswich market-place, in the study of law and Shakespeare. He used to frequent the Ipswich theatre ; and at his death, several of the poor actors, to their delight and surprise, found themselves remembered in his will. "Old Walsh," commonly called "the Gentle Shepherd," claims notice, not only as one of the most venerable Beefsteakers of the first quarter of this century, and the established quintain for the Society to crack its jokes upon, but as one of the latest examples of a rise in the world no longer possible by the same ladder. He began life as a servant of the celebrated Lord Chesterfield, and accompanied his natural son, Philip Stanhope, on the grand tour, as valet. After this, he was made a queen's messenger, and subsequently a Commissioner of customs. Patronage was patronage in those days ; "plush" had a career before it barred in these degenerate times, when not even the great man's butler dare lift his hopes beyond an office-keeper's berth. Queen's messengers now-a-days are captains or colonels in her Majesty's service ; Commissionerships of customs are the reward of long and distinguished public service ; or, if they are occasionally given "on carpet consideration," it is to the sons, and not the valets, of cabinet-ministers. The Society of Beefsteaks—as a type of manners which, however "English," yet seem to be rapidly passing away—has occupied, perhaps, too much of our space. We do not propose to draw aside the curtain that shrouds its contemporary Saturnalia. We have named Lord Brougham, for he is beyond reach of carping or cavil. But for the rest, ex-chancellors, senators, and cabinet-ministers might object to being exhibited as first-rate hands at brewing punch, or as great in an after-dinner ditty ; particularly if they happen at this moment to be driving four-in-hand reputations for

seriousness and solidity among the humbler gigs of Vanity Fair, to the credit of themselves, and the edification of their quondam associates.\*

When Wilkes was attacked by the Peers for breach of privilege, on account of the reflections on Warburton in his *Essay on Woman*, political clubs were in full swing. Brookes's, it is true, was in its infancy, having been founded that year under its original name of Almack's. The Opposition Club met in Albemarle Street, at the house that was Lord Waldegrave's.† The Ministerial Club was the Cocoa-Tree in St. James's Street,—the Tory chocolate-house of Queen Anne's day, by this time transformed into a club, as White's had been thirty years before.

We do not know the exact date at which the Cocoa-Tree was converted into a club. The change had probably taken place before 1746, when the Cocoa-Tree was the head-quarters of the Jacobite‡ party in parliament. For their confabulations and toasts a public chocolate-house would clearly have been no place,—particularly while Jacobite heads were grinning over Temple Bar. We may peep into the Cocoa-Tree over Gibbon's fat shoulders, on Nov. 24, 1762, "when George III. was young,"—the very day before the meeting of the parliament which approved the peace of Fontainebleau. By that peace we obtained Canada from France, and Florida from Spain. To win the ministerial majority of 319 to 65, Pitt is said to have bribed with as free a hand as ever Sir Robert Walpole did. Places in the royal household were needlessly multiplied, pensions lavishly granted, and 25,000*l.* in 100*l.*-notes was distributed to members of the House of Commons in one day.§ A good many of these 100*l.*-notes probably found their way to the Cocoa-Tree. The press was bribed, like the parliament, through the base instrumentality of Smollett, Mallet, Francis Home, and Murphy. Whether Gibbon was as accessible to the influence of

\* Some three years after the Society of Steaks, was founded the Society of Dilettanti, the nominal qualification for which (according to Walpole) was the having been in Italy, the real one—'being drunk.' The Dilettanti, however, belongs rather to the publishing Societies, such as the Roxburghe, the Camden, and the Percy, than to the Clubs proper. It would be well if all the Clubs, having a past, would follow the example of the Dilettanti in publishing historical notices founded on their archives. Those of the Dilettanti will, we are informed, form the subject of an article in a forthcoming number of the *Edinburgh Review*. This of itself renders any further notice of that Society here superfluous.

† H. Walpole to the Earl of Hertford, 1764.

‡ "The Duke has given Brigadier Mordaunt the Pretender's coach, on condition he rode up to London in it. 'That I will, sir,' said he; 'and drive till it stops of its own accord at the Cocoa-Tree.'" *H. Walpole to George Montague*, June 24, 1746.

§ Almon's *Anecdotes of the Life of the Earl of Chatham*. *Wraxall's Memoirs of his own Time*.

bank-notes as to the attractions of place, we are not informed. At all events, he was in Mallet's suspicious company only two days after the date of the following entry in his journal:

"Nov. 24. I dined at the Cocoa-Tree with \*\*\*, who, under a great appearance of oddity, conceals more real humour, good sense, and even knowledge, than half those who laugh at him. We went thence to the play (*The Spanish Friar*); and when it was over, returned to the Cocoa-Tree. That respectable body, of which I have the honour of being a member, affords every evening a sight truly English. Twenty or thirty, perhaps, of the first men of the kingdom in point of fashion and fortune supping at little tables covered with a napkin, in the middle of a coffee-room, upon a bit of cold meat or a sandwich, and drinking a glass of punch. At present we are full of king's counsellors and lords-of-the-bedchamber; who, having jumped into the ministry, make a very singular medley of their old principles and language with their modern ones."

At the Cocoa-Tree, in 1780, was made the celebrated cast at hazard; "the difference of which," writes Walpole to Mann, "amounted to an hundred and four-score thousand pounds." Mr. O'Byrne, an Irish gamester, had won 100,000*l.* of a young Mr. Harvey, of Chigwell, just started from a midshipman into an estate by his elder brother's death. O'Byrne said, "You can never pay me." "I can," said the youth; "my estate will sell for the debt." "No," said O'B., "I will win ten thousand; you shall throw for the odd ninety." They did; and Harvey won. This was unanimous on both sides. The Cocoa-Tree stood near the site of the present Conservative Club.

Let us turn aside for a moment from the pompous company at the Cocoa-Tree, with the ribbons and stars on their laced coats, and Pitt's hundred-pound notes in their pockets, to a humble hostelrie,—the Turk's Head, in Gerard Street, Soho. Here,—while Smollett, Mallet, and Murphy (bribed themselves) stooped to be the channels through which the ministers' guineas filtered to their humbler brethren of the venal press,—was formed a club, including a politician with whom purity was no pretence; a painter of real originality in that age of flat imitation; and an author by calling, who, though he accepted a pension, never forfeited his independence or prostituted his pen. Since Swift, Arbuthnot, Pope, and Gay invited Lord Oxford to take part in the lucubrations of Scriblerus, no such knot of great and good men have ever gathered together for social converse, as met in the Turk's Head, for the first time, during the winter of 1763, under the auspices of Reynolds, Johnson, and Burke.\* Johnson was

\* There is a pleasant chapter on "The Club and its First Members" in Mr. Forster's *Life of Goldsmith*, to which we are glad to acknowledge our obligations.

himself an eminently clubable\* man. Fourteen years before, he had founded a club in Ivy Lane; in imitation of which, the members of the new society were originally limited to nine. Surly and self-important Hawkins—for whom the word “unclubable” was invented†—had been a member of the Ivy Lane Club, and so was invited to join. Topham Beauclerk, the best-natured man, with the most ill-natured wit,—the seeds of consumption already planted in his constitution by early excess, but the life and soul of every company he mixed with; Bennett Langton, six feet six inches in height, a hero-worshipper and mild enthusiast; and Chamier, then secretary in the War Office,—represented pleasure, fashion, and the West-end. Edmund Burke, just freed from his uncongenial service in Ireland under Single-speech Hamilton, took his place by equal right among politicians and professional penmen as the successful author of *The Vindication of Natural Society*, and the *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*, and as the unacknowledged compiler of *The Annual Register*. Burke introduced to the club Dr. Nugent, his father-in-law, an accomplished Roman Catholic physician. The nine were made up by Oliver Goldsmith, recently emerged from the more sordid misery of his early struggles, but still dodging the bailiffs. They clapped him on the shoulder only the year after the club was formed; when the sale of *The Vicar of Wakefield*—thanks to the good offices of Dr. Johnson—rescued him from their clutches.

The nine soon grew to twelve; and by successive accretions the club rose to thirty-five members in 1780, at which number it stood when Boswell published Johnson's *Life* in 1791. It numbers thirty-seven at the present time. The original hour of meeting was seven every Monday evening; when the members eat an inexpensive supper, followed by a late sitting and good conversation. In 1772, the day of meeting was changed to Friday, and the weekly suppers were commuted for fortnightly dinners during the sitting of parliament. As the social status of the club tended upwards, and towards St. Stephen's, its quarters were shifted westward. From Gerard Street,—on the death of the landlord of the Turk's Head, and the shutting up of the house in 1783,—the club migrated to Prince's in Sackville Street; thence to Baxter's, afterwards Thomas's, in Dover Street; in 1792, to Parsloe's, in St. James's Street; and in February 1799, to the Thatched House in the

\* We owe him the word. He applied it to Boswell. The definition of “Club” in the Dictionary is pleasant: “A Society of good fellows, meeting together under certain conditions.”

† The knight having refused to pay his portion of the reckoning for supper, because he usually ate no supper at home, Johnson observed, “Sir John, sir, is a very unclubable man.”

same street. From the time of Garrick's death "the club" has been known as "the Literary Club." Since it assumed the epithet, Mr. Forster hints, in his *Life of Goldsmith*, it has gradually been losing the character. Perhaps it now numbers on its list more titled members, and fewer authors by profession, than its founders would have considered desirable. This opinion, however, is quite open to challenge. Such men as the Marquis of Lansdowne, the late Lord Ellesmere, Lords Brougham, Carlisle, Aberdeen, and Glenelg, hold their place in "the Literary Club" quite as much by virtue of their contributions to literature, or their enlightened support of it, as by right of their rank. At all events, the club still acknowledges literature as its foundation, and love of literature as the tie which binds together its members, whatever their rank and callings. Few clubs can show such a distinguished brotherhood of members as "the Literary." Of authors proper, from 1764 to this date, may be enumerated,—besides its original members, Johnson and Goldsmith,—Dyer and Percy, Gibbon and Sir William Jones, Colman, the two Wartons, Farmer, Steevens, Burney and Malone, Frere and George Ellis, Hallam, Milman, Mountstuart Elphinstone, and Lord Stanhope. Among men equally conspicuous in letters and in the senate, what names outshine those of Burke and Sheridan, Canning, Brougham, and Macaulay? Of statesmen and orators proper, the club claims Fox, Windham, Thomas Grenville, Lord Liverpool, Lords Lansdowne, Aberdeen, and Clarendon. Natural science is represented by Sir Joseph Banks in the last century, by Professor Owen in this. Social science can have no nobler representative than Adam Smith; albeit Boswell *did* think the club had lost caste by electing him. Mr. N. W. Senior is the political economist of the present club. Whewell must stand alone as the embodiment of omniscience, which before him was unrepresented. Scholars and soldiers may be equally proud of Rennel, Leake, and Mure. Besides the clergymen already enumerated as authors, the church has contributed a creditable list of bishops and inferior dignitaries: Shipley of St. Asaph, Barnard of Killaloe, Marley of Pomfret, Hinchcliffe of Peterborough, Douglas of Salisbury, Blomfield of London, Wilberforce of Oxford, Dean Vincent of Westminster, Archdeacon Burney, and Dr. Hawtrey, late master and present provost of Eton. Sir Joshua Reynolds and Sir Charles Eastlake are its two chief pillars of art—slightly unequal. With them we may associate Sir William Chambers and Charles Wilkins. The presence of Drs. Nugent, Blagden, Fordyce, Warren, Vaughan, and Sir Henry Holland, is a proof that in the club medicine has from the first kept up its kinship with literature. The profession of the law

has given the society Lord Ashburton, Lord Stowell and Sir William Grant, Charles Austin and Pemberton Leigh. Lord Overstone may stand as the symbol of money; unless Sir George Cornwall Lewis is to be admitted to that honour by virtue of his Chancellorship of the Exchequer. Sir George would probably prefer his claims to club-membership as a scholar and political writer, to any that can be picked out of a Budget.

Take it all in all, the Literary Club has never degenerated from the high standard of intellectual gifts and personal qualities, which made those unpretending suppers at the Turk's Head an honour eagerly contended for by the wisest, wittiest, and noblest of the eighteenth century.\* "I believe Mr. Fox will allow me to say," writes the Bishop of St. Asaph to Mr.—afterwards Sir William—Jones, "that the honour of being elected into the Turk's-Head Club is not inferior to that of being the representative of Westminster or Surrey. The electors are certainly more disinterested; and I should say they were much better judges of merit, if they had not rejected Lord Camden and chosen me." But our diminishing space warns us that we can afford no more room to this, the most venerable of literary clubs. Let us turn back from the literature to the play and politics of 1764. These deities had their temples; in which a devout night-and-day worship was offered, sometimes to one, but generally to both at once. We shall find some purely play-clubs of the later half of the last century; but scarcely one political club which was not a play-club at the same time. The demon of

\* Lists of the club at different dates can be found both in the original, and in Croker's, edition of *Boswell's Life of Johnson* and in Milman's *Life of Gibbon*. We subjoin the list at this date.

THE CLUB, JANUARY 1857.

Earl of Aberdeen.	Col. Leake.
Duke of Argyle.	Right Hon. J. Pemberton Leigh.
C. Austin, Esq.	Sir G. Cornwall Lewis.
Lord Brougham.	Dr. Blomfield (late Bishop of London).
Archdeacon Burney.	Right Hon. T. B. Macaulay.
Earl of Carlisle.	Col. Mure.
Earl of Clarendon.	Lord Overstone.
Lord Cranworth.	Professor Owen.
Right Hon. Sir David Dundas.	Bishop of Oxford.
Sir C. L. Eastlake.	Dean of St. Paul's (Dr. Milman).
Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone.	N. W. Senior, Esq.
Earl of Ellesmere (deceased).	Augustus Stafford, Esq.
Lord Glenelg.	Earl Stanhope.
Sir Charles Edward Grey.	Sir George Staunton, Bart.
Hudson Gurney, Esq.	William Stirling, Esq.
H. Hallam, Esq.	M. Van de Weyer.
Rev. Dr. Hawtrey, Provost of Eton.	Lord Harry Vane.
Sir Henry Holland.	Rev. Dr. Whewell, Master of Trinity.
Marquis of Lansdowne.	

play never had fuller swing on earth, probably, than from 1760 to the end of the century. His mother-church was White's. The correspondence of Horace Walpole, the four volumes of letters to George Selwyn, and the article of Mr. Cunningham on White's, are our principal authorities for the past of this the head-quarters of play. As a chocolate-house, White's was established in 1698, five doors from the bottom of the west side of St. James's Street. The house was kept by Mr. Arthur,\* and was burnt down in 1733, when the King and the Prince of Wales were present for above an hour, the King encouraging the firemen by a tip of twenty guineas, and five to the guard, and the Prince following the parental example. Indeed it was a case of

“Proximus ardet  
Ucalegon!”

Hogarth has introduced this fire in the sixth plate of the “Rake's Progress,” where the scene is laid in a play-room at White's. The gamblers are so intent on their game, that neither the watchmen who are rushing in with the alarm of fire, nor the flames bursting through the wainscot, have attracted the least attention. Arthur, burnt out, retired to Gaunt's Coffee-house, next to the St. James's, where, in the *Daily Post* of May 3d, 1733, he humbly begs all noblemen and gentlemen that they will favour him with their company as usual. White's was from the first the fashionable chocolate-house of the court-end of the town. The *Tatler*, in his first number, informs his readers, that all accounts of gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment, shall be under the article of White's chocolate-house.

About 1736, the chocolate-house became a club: the principal members being the Duke of Devonshire; the Earls of Cholmondeley, Chesterfield, and Rockingham; Sir John Cope, Major-General Churchill, Bubb Doddington, and Colley Cibber.

Mr. Cunningham quotes from the original rules:

“That every member is to pay one guinea a-year towards having a good cook.

“That supper be upon the table at ten o'clock, and the bill at twelve.

“That every member who is in the room after two o'clock, and plays, is to pay half-a-crown.”

The records of the club are nearly complete from 1736. It was essentially a gambling-house. It is difficult for us at this time to conceive the height to which the gambling passion ran in the days of our great-grandfathers; even five days a-week

\* The same who has given his name to the club called Arthur's, still existing, not far from the site of the original White's.



were not enough for the members of White's. "As I passed over Richmond Green," writes Walpole, June 4th, 1749, "I saw Lord Bath, Lord Lonsdale, and half-a-dozen more of the White's Club, sauntering at the door of a house which they have taken there, and come to every Saturday and Sunday to play at whist." When Lord Sandwich was hunting with the Duke of Cumberland, in 1750, "As the latter," writes Walpole, "has taken a turn of gaming, Sandwich, to make his court and fortune, carries a box and dice in his pocket; and so they throw a main whenever the hounds are at fault, 'upon every green hill and under every green tree.'" It was in vain that the gambling-act, to prevent excessive and deceitful gambling, had been passed in 1745; in vain that young ladies about to marry insisted on their lovers forsaking White's, and the four ladies of the pack,—more fatal than any painted Jezebel of flesh and blood. The principal play was at faro and hazard. Whist was comparatively harmless. Professional gamblers, who lived by dice and cards, provided they were free from the imputation of cheating, procured admission to White's. The Mr. O'Byrne, whose great cast with young Harvey we have already mentioned, was of this class. Taafe, another Irishman, seems to have been a perfect type of the Barry Lynden class of adventurers. He was the companion in a faro-bank of Lady Mary Wortley's Gil Blas of a son, at Paris, in 1751. They cheated a Jew, who would afterwards have cheated them of their unfair winnings. They paid themselves by breaking open his bureau, and taking jewels and money. For this they were imprisoned in *Fors l'Évêque* and the *Châtelet*. "The Speaker," writes Walpole (Nov. 22, 1751), "was railing at gaming and White's, apropos of these two prisoners. Lord Coke, to whom the conversation was addressed, replied, 'Sir, all I can say is, that they are both of them members of the House of Commons, and neither of them of White's.'"

Into this vortex of gambling were drawn the best hearts and largest brains of the century. The parts of Lord Edgumbe, the wit of George Selwyn, the amiability of Lord Carlisle, the splendid talents of Charles Fox, were alike impotent to save from the *Maelstrom*. Lord Carlisle,—in a letter endorsed by George Selwyn, "after the loss of the 10,000*l.*,"—writes in an agony of self-reproach, "I have undone myself; and it is to no purpose to conceal from you my abominable madness and folly. . . . I never lost so much in five times as I have done to-night, and am in debt to the house for the whole." A day or two after, he writes, "Lady Carlisle is very well. You may be sure I shall prevent this man from setting ruin like a bulldog at her. She is very nearly made familiar

with it ; and if it is not made to fly at her, she will approach it with as little fear as any one I know." Lord Carlisle's life, for many years, was a constant struggle between the temptations of the gaming-table and the warnings of conscience and affection. At moments he hung on the verge of suicide. His letters to Selwyn,—who had both good sense and good feeling, though neither could keep him from the dice-box,—are a most afflicting revelation of the hell to which the gambler with an unseared conscience and strong affections perforce condemns himself. The amounts won and lost were frightful. Lord Carlisle tells Selwyn of a set, in which a gentleman, at one point of the game, stood to win 50,000*l.* Sir John Bland, of Kippax Park, who shot himself in 1755, as we learn from Walpole, flirted away his whole fortune at hazard. "He t'other night exceeded what was lost by the late Duke of Bedford, having at one period of the night (though he recovered the greatest part of it) lost two-and-thirty thousand pounds." "Lord Mountford bets Sir John Bland twenty guineas," so runs an entry in the betting-book at White's, "that Beau Nash outlives Cibber." Lord Mountford and Sir John Bland blew their brains out in 1755 : Cibber died two years after, and Nash survived till 1761. This Lord Mountford aimed at reducing even natural affection to the doctrine of chances. When asked, soon after his daughter's marriage, if she was with child, he replied, "Upon my word, I don't know ; I have no bet upon it." Walpole says of him, "He himself, with all his judgment in bets, I think, would have betted any man in England against himself for self-murder." He had lost money ; feared to be reduced to distress ; asked immediately for the government of Virginia, or the Fox-hounds ; and determined to throw the die, of life or death, on the answer he received from Court. The answer was unfavourable. He consulted several people,—indirectly at first, afterwards pretty directly,—on the easiest mode of finishing life ; invited a dinner-party for the day after ; supped at White's, and played at whist till one o'clock of the New-Year's morning. Lord Robert Bertie drank to him "a happy new year ;" he clapped his hand strangely to his eyes. In the morning he sent for a lawyer and three witnesses ; executed his will ; made them read it twice over, paragraph by paragraph ; asked the lawyer if that will would stand good though a man were to shoot himself. Being assured it would, he said, "Pray stay, while I step into the next room," went into the next room, and shot himself.

These madmen resorted to the wildest expedients for raising money. Ancestral oaks and parental constitutions were discounted in post-obits at frightful rates. Fox's best friends

were half-ruined in annuities, given by them as securities for him to the Jews. Five hundred thousand a-year of such annuities, of Fox and his society, were advertised to be sold, at one time. Walpole wonders what Fox will do when he has sold the estates of all his friends. The Damers\* and Foleys† were as bad as the Foxes. Lord Coleraine and his two brothers,‡ their father having bequeathed to his widow all they had left him (1600*l.* a-year), wheedled the poor old lady out of every farthing, leaving her a beggar, dependent on a friend for subsistence. Soon after, these precious sons told their mother she must come to town on business: "It was," says Walpole, "to show her to the Jews, and convince them hers was a good life, unless she is starved." "You must not suppose," he adds, "that such actions are disapproved; for the second brother is going minister to Brussels, that he may not go to jail, whither he ought to go." The fantastic luxury of these spendthrifts equalled their gambling folly. In 1751, seven young men of fashion, headed by St. Leger, gave a dinner at White's, which for a time divided the talk of the town with the beautiful Gunnings. One dish was a tart of duke-cherries from a hot-house; only one glass was tasted out of each bottle of champagne. "The bill of fare is got into print," Walpole writes to Mann; "and with good people has produced the apprehension of another earthquake." A younger son would give his half-sovereign daily for the bouquet he wore in his button-hole. A party of them, dining at the St. Alban's Tavern, had the street littered with straw to prevent noise. The clubs vied with each other in giving the town the most costly masquerades and *ridottos*. Gibbon speaks of one given by the members of Boodle's, in 1774, that cost 2000 guineas.

Walpole is a constant declaimer against the extravagance of the times. "What is England now?" he asks in 1773. "A sink of hideous wealth; filled by nabobs, and emptied by macaronis." These macaronis§ were the "curled darlings" of the day,—the members of the new club at Almack's,—the original Brookes's,—established in Pall Mall, on the site of the British Institution, in 1764. "The old club flourishes very much,"

\* Walpole to Mann, 1776: "John Damer and his two brothers have contracted a debt,—one can scarcely expect to be believed out of England,—of 70,000*l.* . . . The young men of this age seem to make a law amongst themselves for declaring their fathers superannuated at fifty, and thus dispose of their estates as if already their own."

† "Can you believe that Lord Foley's two sons have borrowed money so extravagantly, that the interest they have contracted to pay amounts to 18,000*l.* a-year?" (Walpole to Mann, August 11, 1766.)

‡ One of these was Colonel Hanger, a well-known friend of the Regent's.

§ So called from their affectation of foreign tastes and fashions. They were celebrated for their long curls and eye-glasses.

writes Rigby to Selwyn, in 1765, "and the young one has been better attended than of late years; but the deep play is removed to Almack's,\* where you will certainly follow it." Boodle's; or the "Savoir vivre," Club dates from a few years later; this too was a play-club. Brookes's is indissolubly connected with Fox,—the most notable figure among the gamblers, as he is among the statesmen, of his generation. Inoculated with the love of play by his father,—who gave the boy at fourteen a rouleau of guineas to throw away at the gaming-table at Spa,—cards and dice became a passion with that ardent nature, who, whether his ambition was to ruin himself or to save a nation, pursued that ambition with equal intensity. Before he was twenty-four he owed the Jews 100,000*l*. He never won a large stake except once—8000*l*. But no loss could ruffle him. Topham Beauclerk, calling upon him one morning, after a night of terrible ill-luck, found him quietly reading Herodotus. Beauclerk expressed surprisc at his equanimity. "What would you have me do," said Fox, "when I have lost my last shilling?" Brookes's was founded by twenty-seven noblemen and gentlemen, including the Dukes of Roxburgh and Portland, the Earl of Strathmore, Mr., afterwards Lord, Crewe, and Mr. Fox. The present house was opened in 1778. Poor as its rooms now appear by the side of the splendid interiors of Pall Mall, Tommy Townshend, writing to Selwyn, describes the new house as fitted up with great magnificence. Lord Crewe, one of the founders, died in 1829, after sixty-five years' membership of Brookes's. What wit, what kindness, what folly, what selfishness, what sudden turns of fortune, he must have witnessed in those years! Burke and Reynolds, Garrick and Hume, Gibbon and Sheridan, are among the celebrities of Brookes's; Selwyn divided his time between it and White's. Lord March "punted" here with the same sublime selfishness with which he backed the field at Newmarket, or settled the price of an opera-dancer. Of all the characters one makes acquaintance with in that curious correspondence of George Selwyn's, Lord March, afterwards Duke of Queensberry,—the "Old Q," whom many now living can remember, with his fixed eye and cadaverous face, watching the flow of the human tide past his bow-

\* "The gaming at Almack's, which has taken the *pas* of White's, is worthy the decline of our empire, or commonwealth, which you please. The young men of the age lose ten, fifteen, twenty thousand pounds in an evening there. Lord Stavordale, not one-and-twenty, lost 11,000*l* there last Tuesday, but recovered it by one great hand at hazard. He swore a great oath—'Now if I had been playing *deep*, I might have won millions.' His cousin, Charles Fox, shines equally there and in the House of Commons. He was twenty-one yesterday se'night, and is already one of our best speakers. Yesterday he was made a Lord of the Admiralty." (Walpole to Mann, February 2d, 1770.)

window in Pall Mall,—is the only one utterly and irredeemably diabolical. He had as much regard for Selwyn as he could have for any one. But this regard is too slight to temper the impression which this man's letters leave on us, of the most frigid self-indulgent egotism, the most calculating worldliness, the stoniest insensibility\* to all but the earthy and animal, the most systematic and unblushing debauchery, an unbelief in the virtue of man or woman, a contempt for knowledge and for public opinion that rises to the Mephistophelic. The rest of Selwyn's principal correspondents,—Gilly Williams, Hare, Fitzpatrick, the Townsends, Burgoyne, Storer, and above all, Lord Carlisle,—appear from these letters to have been kindly "clubable" men, and warm friends. When Lord Grantham is travelling in Spain, the club fixes a scheme for writing to him in rotation. Tickell's "Lines from the Hon. Charles Fox to the Hon. John Townshend cruising," pleasantly describe the delight with which Townshend would be welcomed back at Brookes's :

"Soon as to Brookes's thence thy footsteps bend,  
 What gratulations thy approach attend !  
 See Gibbon tap his box ; auspicious sign,  
 That classic compliment and wit combine.  
 See Beauclerk's cheek a tinge of red surprise,  
 And friendship give what cruel health denies.  
 Important Townshend ! what can thee withstand ?  
 The lingering black-ball lags in Boothby's hand.  
 E'en Draper checks the sentimental sigh ;  
 And Smith, without an oath, suspends the die."

Charles Fox was to give the supper at his own lodgings, then near the club :

"Derby shall send, if not his plate, his cooks,  
 And know, I've brought the best champagne from Brookes,—  
 From liberal Brookes, whose speculative skill  
 Is hasty credit, and a distant bill ;  
 Who, nursed in clubs, disdains a vulgar trade,  
 Exults to trust, and blushes to be paid."

Besides trusting the members of the club for wine and suppers, Brookes lent them money. But in spite of,—or should we not rather say, thanks to,—the hasty-credit and the distant-bill

\* Wilberforce describes a dinner with the Duke of Queensberry, at his Richmond villa. "The party was very small and select: Pitt, Lord and Lady Chat-ham, the Duchess of Gordon, and George Selwyn,—who lived for society, and continued in it till he looked really like the wax-work figure of a corpse,—were amongst the guests. We dined carly, that some of our party might be ready to attend the opera. The dinner was sumptuous; the views from the villa quite enchanting, and the Thames in all its glory; but the duke looked on with indifference. 'What is there,' he said, 'to make so much of in the Thames? I am quite tired of it: there it goes, flow, flow, flow, always the same.'"

system, he died poor about 1782. The members of White's had the same loyal love for their smoky rooms as those of Brookes's had for their magnificent house. When Jack Mostyn was governor of Mahon, in 1771, he established a "White's" in the town, in lieu of old White's, "his darling pleasure." It was a whist-club, composed of officers of the garrison; and "what happens to be droll," says Henry St. John, writing to Selwyn, "the man at whose house we meet happens to be called White." White's, like Brookes's, has all along been conducted on the "farming" system. Mr. Raggett in the one establishment, Mr. Banderett in the other, is the owner of house, furniture, plate, and wine, supplying every thing to members at a rate approved by the committee, and subject generally to their approbation of his arrangements.

But the White of the St. James's Street house was a mythical personage. Mackreth was the original keeper of the club. He retired in 1763, in which year he recommends to George Selwyn's patronage his near relation and successor "the Cherubim." We afterwards hear of him speculating in the Alley; and in 1774, Lord Oxford returned him as member for his borough of Castle-Rising, with no less a colleague than Mr. Wedderburne! *Servus curru portatur eodem.* Horace Walpole writes to Mann on this occasion, "This, I suppose, will offend the Scottish consul. . . . For my part, waiter for waiter; I see little difference; they are all equally ready to cry, 'coming, coming, sir!'" The truth is, that Walpole's mad nephew owed Mackreth money, and took this means of repaying him. But Bob's presence in the House of Commons was disagreeable to many of his old customers. Before the end of the year he was persuaded to be modest, and give up, or rather sell, his seat.

That the keeper of White's should have risen to be a member of parliament, was, after all, not so extraordinary. A waitership at one of the St. James's Street Clubs was the road to fortune.\* Thomas Rumbold, originally a waiter at White's, got an appointment in India, and subsequently rose to be Sir Thomas, and governor of Madras. On his return, with immense wealth, a bill of pains and penalties was brought into the House by Dundas, with the view of stripping Sir Thomas of his ill-gotten gains. The bill was briskly pushed through the earlier stages; suddenly, the proceedings upon it were arrested by adjournment, and the measure fell to the ground. The rumour of the day attributed the nabob's escape to the corrupt assistance

\* "One young gentleman who was getting an estate, but was so indiscreet as to step out of his way to rob a comrade, is convicted, and to be transported; in short, one of the waiters at Arthur's. George Selwyn says, 'What a horrid idea he will give of us to the people in Newgate!'" (Walpole to Montague, 1759.)

of Rigby; who, in 1782, found himself, by Lord North's resignation, deprived of his place in the Pay-Office, and called upon to refund a large amount of public moneys unaccounted for. In this strait, Rigby was believed to have had recourse to Rumbold. Their acquaintance had commenced in earlier days, under very different circumstances;\* when Rigby was one of the boldest "punters" at White's, and Rumbold bowed to him for half-crowns. A compact is said to have been entered into between the nabob and the ex-Paymaster of the Forces, by which the latter was to receive a large sum of money, on condition of releasing the former from the impending pains and penalties. The truth of this report has been vehemently denied; but the circumstances are suspicious. The bill was dropped: Dundas, its introducer, was Rigby's intimate associate. Rigby's nephew and heir soon after married Rumbold's† daughter. Sir Thomas himself had married a daughter of Dr. Law, Bishop of Carlisle. The worthy bishop stood godfather to one of Rumbold's children; the other godfather was the Nabob of Arcot, and the child was christened "Mahomet." So, at least, Walpole informs Mann.

We have spoken already of the betting-books at White's and Brookes's. In these singular volumes, which still exist, may be found bets on all conceivable subjects;—bets on births, deaths, and marriages; on the length of a life, or the duration of a ministry; on a rascal's risk of the halter,‡ or a placeman's prospect of a coronet; on the chances of an election, or the sanity of the king; on the shock of an earthquake, or the last scandal at Ranelagh, or Madame Cornely's. A man dropped down at the door of White's; he was carried into the house. Was

\* "I am just got home from a cock-match, where I have won forty pounds in ready money; and not having dined, am waiting till I hear the rattle of the coaches from the House of Commons, in order to dine at White's. . . . I held my resolution of not going to the ridotto till past three o'clock; when, finding nobody was willing to sit any longer but Boone, who was not able, I took, as I thought, the least of two evils, and so went there rather than to bed; but found it so infinitely dull, that I retired in half-an-hour. The next morning I heard there had been extreme deep play, and that Harry Furnese went drunk from White's at six o'clock, and won the dear memorable sum of 1000 guineas. He won the chief part of Done-rale and Bob Bertie." (Rigby to Selwyn, March 12, 1745.)

† The following epigram on Rumbold had great success:

"When Bob Mackreth served Arthur's crew,  
'Rumbold,' he cried, 'come, black my shoe!'  
And Rumbold answered, 'Yea, Bob!'  
But now, returned from India's land,  
He scorns to obey the proud command,  
And boldly answers, 'Na—Bob!'"

‡ "There is a man about town, a Sir William Burdett, a man of very good family, but most infamous character. In short, to give you his character at once, there is a wager entered in the bet-book at White's (an Ms., which I may one day or other give you an account of), that the first baronet that will be hanged is this Sir William Burdett." (Walpole to Mann, 1768.)

he dead or not? The odds were immediately given and taken for and against. It was proposed to bleed him. Those who had taken the odds the man was dead protested that the use of a lancet would affect the fairness of the bet.\* Walpole has a good story of a parson, who, coming into White's on the morning of the earthquake of 1750, and hearing bets laid whether the shock was caused by an earthquake, or the blowing up of powder-mills, went away in horror, protesting they were such an impious set, that he believed, "if the last trump were to sound, they would bet puppet-show against Judgment."

One Mr. Blake betted 1500*l.* that a man could live twelve hours under water; hired a desperate fellow, and sunk him in a ship by way of experiment. Neither ship nor man reappeared. "Another man and ship are to be tried for their lives," adds Walpole,† who is our authority for this story, "instead of Mr. Blake, the assassin."

Play and pleasure have always predominated over politics at White's. At Brookes's, on the contrary, politics, from a very early period in the history of the club, held divided empire with play,—or rather the two went on in most harmonious alliance. How the men of that time managed to keep up their killing pace may well puzzle modern milksops. Gibbon tells Lord Sheffield (in Feb. 1772) of Fox preparing himself for the debate on the relief of the clergy from subscription to the Articles, by passing twenty-two hours in the pious exercise of hazard, at a cost of five hundred pounds an hour. We hear of his spending four-and-twenty hours without interruption in the House of Commons, the hazard-room at Brookes's, and at Newmarket, or on the road from one to the other; and of his being the hero of all three. And yet Fox lived to be fifty-eight, though we are told he had a bad constitution, and indulged in the habitual use of opium. Horace Walpole has left us a picture—which even Lord Holland, from his boyish recollections, is forced to admit has some truth to recommend it—of one of Fox's mornings, about 1783; when Fox, though the undoubted head of his party, was still what would now-a-days be called "a boy" of thirty-four. He lodged at this time in St. James's Street, close to his favourite club: "As soon as he rose, which was very late, he held a levee of his followers, and of the members of the gaming-club at Brookes's,—all his disciples. His bristly black person and shagged breast, quite open, and rarely purified by any ablu-

\* It is true, Walpole calls this "a good story made on White's." "Lord Digby is very soon to be married to Miss Fielding. Thousands might have been won in this house (White's), on his Lordship not knowing that such a being existed." (Gilly Williams to George Selwyn, 1763.)

† Letter to Sir H. Mann, July 10, 1774.



tions, was wrapped in a foul linen nightgown, and his bushy hair dishevelled. In these cynic weeds, and with epicurean good-humour, did he dictate his politics; and in this school did the heir of the crown attend his lessons, and imbibe them." It was probably the influence of Fox's gifted and beautiful nature which so decidedly determined to Whiggery the principles of Brookes's. From Brookes's radiated that humour which riots in the *Rolliad*, and which has animated thousands of now-forgotten pasquinades in prose and verse. Tickell, Fitzpatrick, and Sheridan, with George Ellis and Canning,—neither of them as yet anti-Jacobin,—were the most brilliant captains in this light warfare. The *Anti-Jacobin* was but an imitation of the *Rolliad*. The imitation,—thanks to "the Rovers," "the Loves of the Triangles," and "the Needy Knife-Grinder,"—is still read while the original is forgotten. But we know of nothing in the *Anti-Jacobin* more humorous than the testimonials prefixed to the probationary Odes for the Laureateship in the *Rolliad*; and nothing better in the way of burlesque verse than the odes themselves.

Pitt's personal adherents mustered chiefly at Goostree's Club, in Pall Mall,\* of which Pitt himself, in 1780-81, was a habitual frequenter. To this date, also, belong "the Independents;" a club of about forty members of the House of Commons, opponents of the Coalition ministry, whose principle of union was a resolution to take neither place, pension, nor peerage. In a few years, Wilberforce and Bankes were the only ones of the incorruptible forty who were not either peers, pensioners, or placemen. There was gambling at Goostree's, as at all the West-end clubs of this time. Wilberforce describes Pitt as playing with intense and characteristic eagerness. But he soon became sensible of the danger which lurked behind the fascination of cards and dice, and suddenly abandoned both for ever. When Wilberforce came up to London from the university, in 1780 (as he tells us in his memoranda), he belonged to five clubs—Miles and Evans's, Brookes's, Boodle's, White's, and Goostree's. "The first time I was at Brookes's," he adds, "scarcely knowing any one, I joined, from mere shyness, in play at the faro-table, where George Selwyn kept bank. A friend, who knew my inexperience, and regarded me as a

\* On the site of the British Institution. The members were about twenty-five in number, and included Pratt (afterwards Lord Camden), Lords Euston, Chatham, Graham, Duncannon, Althorpe, Apsley, G. Cavendish, and Lennox; Messrs. Eliot, St. Andrew St. John, Bridgman (afterwards Lord Bradford), Morris Robinson (afterwards Lord Rokeby), R. Smith (afterwards Lord Carrington), W. Grenville (afterwards Lord Grenville), Pepper Arden (afterwards Lord Alvanley), Mr. Edwards, Mr. Marsham, Mr. Pitt, Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Bankes, Mr. Thomas Steele, General Smith, Mr. Windham. *Life of Wilberforce.*

victim decked out for sacrifice, called to me, 'What, Wilberforce, is that you?' Selwyn quite resented the interference; and turning to him, said, in his most expressive tone, 'O, sir, don't interrupt Mr. Wilberforce; he could not be better employed.' Nothing could be more luxurious than the style of these clubs. Fox, Sheridan, Fitzherbert, and all your leading men, frequented them, and associated upon the easiest terms: you chatted, played at cards, or gambled, as you pleased." But what was the social influence of this club-life? Are we to set off the pleasant chat and unrestrained fun of club dinners and suppers against the mad excitement of drink and play that followed, with the train of resulting evils,—gout, paralysis, embarrassment, ruin, suicide; homes first forsaken, then made wretched, then left desolate? It is not pleasant to dwell on that terrible chain of cause and effect. How changed is all in St. James's Street since those fast and furious days! The dandies still muster in the bow-windows at White's to ogle the passers-by, and kill reputations; but the rattle of the dice-box is heard no more in the halls of Raggett; and the hazard-room has ceased to be. The play has subsided to a quiet whist-party of elderly gentlemen, at guinea points and five guineas on the rubber; hazard is not even mentioned in the rules and regulations of the club.

So, too, at Brookes's. How altered now from what it was when Mr. Thynne left the club in disgust, because he had only won 12,000 guineas in two months! The card-room is still lighted up by night during the season. Mr. Banderett, or his representative, still takes his stand by the shaded lamp behind the green curtain, at the desk, from which in old times the counters used to be dealt out,—ammunition for the terrible battle of the hazard-table. But the groom-porter's occupation is gone. Only the grim black-browed face of Charles Fox on the wall of the reception-room down-stairs recalls the history of the past. What merry suppers, rampant orgies, wild bets, colossal winnings and losings, party conclaves, and state secrets, the ears of those quiet neutral-tinted walls have tingled with in days gone by! The Fox club still meets at Brookes's; but that club, its doctrines and its traditions, are of the past. There is a public now more potent than all parties. With the omnipotence of its will can coexist no such empire as a Pitt or a Fox wielded over their followers.

But there still hangs round the old clubs of St. James's Street an odour of other times. The Conservative, with its staring bran-new exterior, and its slap-dash encaustic decoration, is a parvenu, an anachronism, and an anomaly. Let it retreat to Pall Mall among its showy brethren of the hour,

and leave Arthur's and Boodle's and Brookes's and White's to their sober old gentlemanlike exclusiveness,—their traditions of the past,—their palæological rules and regulations,—their antediluvian systems of management. These institutions form the only club-link between our days and those of our grand-fathers. For this reason, a notice of them seems to form the fitting close of an article on the London Clubs of the last century. The London Clubs of our own time we hope to make the subject of a future article. We shall have more to say on the social bearings of the club-life we have been describing, when we try to estimate the influence of these associations on our own times. It is impossible to pronounce fairly as to the character of club-influences on either period, unless both generations are brought to account.

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ART. IV.—ANCIENT INDIA.\*

*Life in Ancient India.* By Mrs. Speir. London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1856.

*Indische Alterthumskunde.* Von Christian Lassen. (*Indian Archaeology.*) Bonn: König. Vol. I. 1847; Vol. II. 1849; Vol. III. Part I. 1857.

\* We adopt Weber's mode of transcription of the Sanskrit letters into Roman, as that which does least violence to the ordinary received powers of the latter, and requires the smallest apparatus of diacritical dots. It is greatly to be desired that some uniform and accurate system should be adopted; and Weber's seems to us greatly superior to Dr. Max Müller's Missionary Alphabet, which, while making no use of the letters *c, j, g, x*, adopts the unsightly practice of writing *k* and *g* in italics to indicate the soft sound of *c* and *j*. The only letters employed by us with a power different to that which they have in English are the following:

*Vowels* and *Diphthongs* as in Italian; long vowels circumflexed.

*ri* nearly as in English "merrily," very short; *ri* as in *tree*.

*c* as in Italian *città*, English *church*, before all letters alike.

*ç* nearly like *s*, or French *ch* (so written to imply its origin from a *k* sound).

*x* like *ksh*.

*t, d, n*, a rather duller sound, more in the head, than the simple *t, d, n*.

*m* after a vowel, nearly as the French nasal sounds.

*h* a very slight aspirate.

*k* after a consonant (*kk, qk, ch, jh, tk, dk, th, dh, pk, bh*) is heard separately, as in Welsh (Rhyll); but *sh* as in English.

Want of care and consistency in the orthography of Sanskrit names is the only fault with which we have to charge Mrs. Speir. She writes them now according to the loose English method of spelling modern Indian names, and now according to the stricter system introduced on the Continent, apparently in conformity to the source whence she has taken them. And some are strangely misspelt; as *Susanaga* for *Sisunaga* (properly *Çisunaga*).

*Academische Vorlesungen über indische Literaturgeschichte.* Von Dr. Albrecht Weber. (*University Lectures on the History of Indian Literature.*) Berlin: Dümmler, 1852.

*Modern Investigations on Ancient India.* A Lecture by Professor A. Weber. Translated by Fanny Metcalfe. London: Williams and Norgate, 1857.

*Specimens of Old Indian Poetry.* By R. T. Griffith. London: 1852.

WHEN India was first opened to the commerce and the investigating spirit of Europe, its inhabitants presented the spectacle of a people of remarkable manual and mechanical ingenuity, and of rare mental subtlety; possessing a highly complex social system, which abounded in artificial restrictions, recommended by no obvious fitness, yet scrupulously observed both by those who reaped their benefits and by those who suffered from their oppression; owning a unique species of hierarchy, and a religion which counted its gods by thousands, and pictured them of grotesque and hideous form, with arms and legs by the dozen; and having a chronology which floundered hopelessly amidst its mundane periods of thousands and millions of years. It was, moreover, a people, by a "peculiar institution" more tyrannous than that of the American States, broken up almost infinitesimally into distinct races, voluntarily debarring themselves from intermarriage and the kindly communion of mutual hospitality, and consigning the noblest opportunities yielded by nature to neglect rather than shake off the yoke of a self-imposed bondage.

Yet a little meditation upon the extraordinary phenomenon here presented, must have convinced a thoughtful observer that India was more than this. The numerous arms which made the figures of their idols hideous, were they not a degenerate way of foreshadowing the universal and simultaneous action of Deity? The three eyes, do they not indicate his omniscience? And if ages of the most grinding despotism of foreign conquerors have not availed to crush out of the Indian character that firmness which even now leads the widow to sacrifice herself on her husband's funeral pile, and prompts the observance of the most vexatious ordinances of caste, may not there have been, when India was free, and there was a cause worth striving for, a high-souled heroism, a battling against evil, which would have secured this nation a place among the greatest in the world?

Nay more. If even the light of Christian truth has often, in its passage through dark ages, been dimmed and nearly extinguished in the foul vapours of superstition and bigotry, how much more likely would be the lesser glimmer of truth and purity, which we may suppose to have enlightened the early Indians,

to go out amidst the grossness of sensualism and superstition, and the degrading influences of a series of merciless and desolating conquests? If that Hebrew nation, which, in the freshness of their religious life, whilst they still felt their morality and their law to be directly inspired by the Spirit of God, embodied both the one and the other in ten grand Commandments, of which nine are purely moral and spiritual, and one only of a formal and ritual nature, lived to incur the rebuke that they were wont to pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and omitted the weightier matters of the law,—lived to be slaves to the dry technicalities of the Talmud,—might not, conversely, even the meaningless formalities of the Indian system be the dry bones from which the life-vigour of an older scheme of social law worth living for had departed? If the once living tongue of the Jewish Scriptures came in time to require the overgrowth of points and signs, and the learning of schools and doctors, to regulate the pronunciation of a syllable, or seek a mystical meaning in a simple word,—might not, conversely, the magic formulæ of Vedic texts, and the scholasticism of Vedic doctors, be the last phase of decrepitude of an Indian Scripture, which, like the Jewish, had once had a natural and vigorous life?

This has been more or less consciously felt with regard to India ever since a knowledge of that country has been gained by Europeans. Even old Abraham Roger,\* while giving an account of the idols of the popular mythology, with very little indication that he saw any thing in them but the grotesqueness of their outward forms, and asserting that the Indians worshipped the devil, takes pleasure in giving a translation of the Proverbs of Bhartrihari, which frequently embody a wisdom not of infernal parentage. Sir W. Jones translates the celebrated prayer (Gâyatrî) from the Rigvêda in a way implying that he regarded it as addressed to the supreme Godhead, "who illuminates all, who recreates all, from whom all proceed, to whom all must return, whom we invoke to direct our understandings aright in our progress towards his holy seat." And F. Schlegel said in 1808: "We cannot deny to the Ancient Indians the recognition of the true God; as all their old writings are full of expressions as noble, clear, and lofty, as profound and carefully discriminating and significant, as it is possible for human language to speak of God at all."† And again, of their more developed system: "It is the first system which took the place of the truth: wild fictions and gross error; but every where still traces of divine truth, and the expression of that terror and that melancholy which are the natural consequences of the first fall-

\* Opene Dewre tot het verborgen Heidendom. Leyden, 1651.

† Sprache und Weisheit der Indier, p. 103.

ing away of man from God."\* This is conceived in a noble spirit, that of deducing the religious life of a people from a pure and not a devilish source; but it goes too far; for, as Bohlen says, "least of all must we, as some do, find the religion of a people in the works of philosophers." The popular religion of India is as far removed from the profound thoughts of its philosophers on heavenly themes, as the Homeric mythology is from the spiritual wisdom of the Platonic Socrates; yet as the Homeric mythology abounds in forms alternately graceful, grand, and fantastic, which betoken a fresh and genial love, or rather adoration, of nature, so in India, the further we trace the popular religion back, the more fresh and spontaneous appears the acknowledgment of the powers that rule the universe.

During the last quarter of a century, our knowledge of Ancient India has advanced with such rapid strides, and the memorials of the progress made are contained in so many volumes, especially of periodical literature, in India, England, and the Continent, that it would be difficult accurately to trace the advance. It becomes very apparent if we compare Bohlen's work† with Mrs. Speir's. Of the earliest, or Vedic, period of Indian society, which yields some of this lady's most attractive chapters, Bohlen was able to say almost nothing. Then not a line of the Vêdas had been published in the original; and the only information accessible was contained in Colebrooke's celebrated Essay, Sir W. Jones's translation of the above-mentioned prayer, and some translations, by Rammohun Roy, of a few of the supplements to the Vêdas, called "Upanishad." Now the libraries of London, Oxford, Paris, and Berlin, possess Mss. of the Vêdas; the publication of one is completed, and that of the other three far advanced, and the most important are accessible in translations. Of the two great epics, only a very few fragments from near the commencement, and those chiefly consisting of episodes unconnected with the main action, and now confessed to be of later date, had been made public at the former period. Now both these immense poems lie before us in the original Sanskrit, and one of them in a complete Italian translation; and there are, perhaps, a dozen scholars in Europe acquainted with their entire contents. Of the dramas, more was known through Wilson's translation of six, and Sir W. Jones's of one; but only two were published in the original language. The most important ancient work then at all adequately known, was the "Code of Manu;" but after that, the far less instructive literature of fables and stories of no great antiquity, and the comparatively modern lyrics, constituted the major part of what was

\* Sprache und Weisheit der Indier, p. 106.

† Das alte Indien. 2 vols. Königsberg, 1830.

accessible in print. The establishment of a literary organ for Indian lore in Germany by the Schlegels (1820) was an event of prime importance. After issuing, during ten years, occasional numbers, written chiefly by themselves, they reaped their reward: the band of Orientalists was now strong enough to set up a regular quarterly journal,\* which steadily continued its work, until in 1844 the small band had swelled into a powerful cohort, able to constitute itself a "German Oriental Society," and maintain a larger journal, establish a library, subsidise the publication of important oriental works, and otherwise further their great object—the advancement of the knowledge of Asiatic civilisation. And in 1849, so copious was the information to be imparted, or so manifold the subjects to be discussed, having connection with India, that it was found desirable to establish a separate journal specially devoted to topics of Indian literature.† In 1820, Schlegel complained bitterly of the difficulty of obtaining, even through the mediation of English friends, and at considerable expense, any books published in India; now there are booksellers in Berlin and Leipzig who maintain direct communication with Calcutta. In 1820, there was no fount of Sanskrit types in Germany, nor, we believe, on the Continent; now every university-town of eminence possesses them; and whereas then the publication of a Sanskrit work required to be fortified by a strong list of subscribers, or subsidised by an Academy, now the largest works are frequently undertaken by a bookseller at his own risk.

We have entered into these details for the double purpose of indicating by tangible facts the surprising increase in the European knowledge of and interest in Ancient India, and of showing that with this steady accumulation of new matter has grown up the desirability, and the possibility, of a new descriptive work, which should be for the year 1857 what Bohlen's was for 1830.

In the mean time a great work has been progressing, which purports to treat as exhaustively as possible the subject of Indian antiquity. The first volume of Professor Lassen's *Indische Alterthumskunde* appeared in 1847, the second in 1849, and a first instalment of the third has just reached us. There are 2,650 closely printed octavo pages: of which geography occupies 352; ethnology, 112; chronology, 72; history, 1000; history of religion, literature, the sciences, geographical knowledge, commerce, and natural products, 577; history of the Greek knowledge of India, 341; appendices, 65; and, alas, corrections and additions, 96. The last item indicates the worst feature of this valuable

\* Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes.

† Weber's Indische Studien.

work ; it is too often negligently composed and carelessly printed ; and the author's proneness to seize the opportunity afforded by a list of addenda and corrigenda to enlarge, modify, or retract some statement in the text, besides causing an unwelcome increase of labour to the reader, produces an uncomfortable sense of insecurity in his mind. However, we must not be too hard upon Lassen. Dealing with a vast unsifted mass of writings in English, French, and German ; in Greek and Latin ; in Sanskrit, Pâli, Arabic, Persian, Tibetan, and Chinese ; and with the legends of oriental coins,—he has had to pioneer his way through a dense forest of historic materials, and at every step to secure his footing before adventuring further. At the outset success would have seemed unattainable by the powers of a single man ; and wonder it is that he has paved so firm a road. It was inevitable from the very nature of the enterprise that the book should be a large, and not a popular one ; but we see cause, besides, to charge it with faults of construction not inevitable. The arrangement of the work proposed at the outset\* is artificial, and has been found actually unworkable ; and it contributes to hamper the writer, to swell the work unnecessarily by saying in two places what might be said in one, and to bewilder the reader by rendering him uncertain where he should look for information on a given subject. The formal separation of the outward and the inward, the political and the religious, the public and the private history of a people, is surely little in accordance with a true conception of history. The threads of both branches are inseparably interwoven ; and as with individuals, any system of biography which should sunder Bacon the statesman from Bacon the philosopher would be palpably absurd, and the estimate of his character founded upon his statesmanship incomplete, or even false, till filled in by that based on his philosophy ; so with nations, their religious ideas are ever acting on their political system, and their political position determining their spiritual development in religion and art. Nor is it easy to see how with the Indians, for whom, as for the Jews, laws have a divine sanction, it will be possible to separate the "action of their mind in the state and the family" from its "development in religion." Thus the first part, the geographical, is the only one which could satisfactorily be treated independently. We are not therefore surprised, that into the second part (not yet completed) the author has felt himself compelled to insert chapters, not indeed on literature, philosophy,

\* Book I. Description of the countries of India, their climate, products, &c. II. Their political history. III. and IV. Development of the Indian mind in religion and literature, art and science. V. and VI. Action of the Indian mind in the State (constitution) and the Family.



and religion, but on their *history*, which seem stolen from the later books. The divorce of the history from the æsthetics of literature, of the history from the dogmas of religion, is surely very undesirable. Cut off from æsthetical criticism, the history of literature becomes a dry discussion on dates and authorship; separated from the dogmatical or spiritual portion, religion can only count up the objects of its worship, and fix the chronology of its leading manifestations. Thus a large part of Lassen's work labours under an incurable dryness, which in our opinion is mainly due to the relegation of the quickening streams of religion, literature, and art, to a subsequent book. And this would go far to discourage those not possessing the true German desire to fathom a subject to the bottom, from adventuring on the shoreless sea of Indian antiquity at all.

Mrs. Speir has described Ancient India picturesquely, and therefore popularly. She leads the reader into no abstruse discussions on dates; wastes not his patience, nor trifles with his time, by examining the legends of coins written in barbarous tongues and characters, for the chance of adding one more name to a dynasty of unknown kings; enters not into all the vexatious details of ritual and caste laws;—but from a rich store of knowledge, which disdains not to embrace these matters too, she brings forth the most pregnant illustrations of the social and religious systems of the people and age under review, the great leading features of their epic story, the most sparkling gems of their lyric verse: and in the history contrives, by slightly indicating the obscurer periods, and tracing out the imposing heroic forms of the more brilliant ones in bold outline, to satisfy the reader's curiosity and leave his mind clear. For a connected history, including the less known epochs and the less important dynasties: for a complete survey of the Sanskrit literature, embracing fables and stories and the later dramas; for a full view of the Indian philosophical systems, and for a minute description of the achievements of Indian art,—we must of course consult larger and more special works; but for a faithful picture of the leading features of the history, literature, philosophy, and art, we need not wish for a better or a larger one than Mrs. Speir's. The ordinary reader, who desires to estimate what part India has borne in the general history of civilisation, may here have his desires satisfied; and the student who intends to drink deeper at the springs of Indian wisdom, will be thankful for this handbook to teach him what to expect, and where to find. In her manner of handling her subjects she betrays a quiet mastery over them, which would give the reader full confidence that she has had recourse to the best and most recent authorities, were this not attested by scholarlike references on almost every page.

Of the truth and beauty of her moral judgments we mean to give the reader an opportunity of judging; of the freshness and vigour with which she can reproduce a forgotten type of society like the Vedic, we can give no idea, unless we were to extract the whole chapter.

The most striking circumstance with regard to the ancient civilisation of India, and that which opposes the most formidable barrier in the way of those who endeavour to present its salient features, is the utter absence of any thing like credible history. The Indians have never had any correct feeling of the difference between fact and fable. In the Greek history, the line of demarcation between the mythic and the historic age is tolerably well defined; and is confessed by the admission that with the Trojan war the *heroic* age found its limit. The line may there have been differently drawn in different Grecian states, according to their advance in culture; and in later times we do find personages, such as Lycurgus, whose half-mythic half-historic nature perplexes the historian: but we find ourselves already under a different heaven: national leaders are content to be of purely human parentage; rivers endued with human form and voice no more enter the lists as worthy opponents of the chief of warriors; kings no longer boast a progeny of fifty sons, living in fifty golden palaces. In India no such limit is discernible; kings continue to trace their descent from Sun and Moon, and reign for hundreds of years; the ninety-nine sons of one are all murdered and supplanted by the hundredth; and gods and giants appear on the scene when we fancied we were drawing nearer the historic period. Chronology is hopelessly at fault; confounding various kings of the same name; assigning reigns of an impossible length to fill up gaps, even in comparatively recent times; and extending the lives of the older rulers to a more than patriarchal length, in accommodation to the preconceived system of four ages of the world. Buddhism, which imparted the first impulse towards systematic history, would in some aspects almost appear to have brought back the mythic age again with more than mythic fantasy, when we see Buddha himself transformed into a god, and regarded as the twenty-fifth in a series of mythic Buddhas who have appeared in the various ages of the world; when we see, further, the first-fruits of the system in the novel notion of saints flying through the air, animals paying service to holy men, stars acting as guide-posts, demons endowed with human forms, and able to commute these at pleasure with those of beasts. Nay, even the names of Buddha's mother and nurse betray the allegory of mythology: for the word *Mâyâ* "is a philosophical term, and denotes the creative power of the deity; his mother had probably therefore originally another

name. This conjecture is confirmed by the fact that her sister, who became Buddha's nurse, is called Prajāpatī (creatix), especially as this name is nowhere else found as the name of a female."\* It is true that in the history of Buddhism we have the advantage of being able to compare together accounts from very different, indeed independent, sources, namely, the books of the northern Buddhists (China and Tibet), and those of the southern (Ceylon); and that this, affording a basis for something like historical criticism, enables us to some extent to divest the simple facts of Buddhism from the gorgeous and fantastic drapery of fables which was gradually thrown around it. Still some mythic elements (as that of Māyā) remain; and nothing is yet done towards fixing the chronology of that great turning-point in the history of Asia.

In the absence of any native accounts upon which, unsupported from other sources, reliance can be placed, the means at our disposal for the history of India are, the testimony of foreign writers, especially Greek, and to a smaller extent Roman, Tibetan, Chinese, and Arabic; inscriptions; and coins. The Greek testimony is borne by Herodotus and Ctesias alone, for the period previous to Alexander; for the succeeding period most notably by Megasthenes, whose accurate observation of geography, products, and manners, Lassen, reviewing his statements in detail, finds reason to admire at every step; further, by Nearchus, Bardesanes, and other later writers. But of the history of India the Greeks knew next to nothing. The Tibetan and Chinese books are an authority solely for the Buddhistic history of India; and the Arabic for the period subsequent to the Mohammedan conquest (A.D. 1001). The coins are of more extensive utility; but as the art appears to have been introduced by the Greeks, and in consequence practised chiefly in the northern kingdoms, numismatic authority is limited both as to place and time. And the coins have only begun to be collected and questioned since 1828 at the earliest, when James Prinsep "plunged into the subject with all the ardour of youth and genius. . . . Mr. Prinsep and his enthusiastic young friends studied and collected coins. . . . He commenced with very little knowledge of Oriental languages; but his generous ardour brought him every required assistance."† So that "with regard to coins, inquirers into Indian history are not, as with inscriptions, in possession of the advantage of being able to avail themselves of a great number of these memorials."‡ There remain the inscriptions, which are inscribed either on rocks or on commemorative pillars. The oldest, the discovery and deciphering of which form an epoch in the restitution of Indian

\* Lassen, ii. 68.

† Mrs. Speir, p. 223.

‡ Lassen, ii. 48.

history, are those of the Buddhist king Açôka, or Piyadâsi, which bear date 247 B.C., and were engraved on pillars at Delhi, Allahabad, Bakra, Mattiah, and Radhiah (the three last places east of the Ganges), and Sanchi in Malva; and on rocks at Girnar in Guzerat, Dhauli in Cuttack, Kapur di Giri in the Penjâb, and Byrath near Bhabra. They are all composed, not in the old classical language (Sanskrit), but in a form of Pâli, and therefore afford a valuable historical datum as to the time when pure Sanskrit ceased to be the spoken language of the people; that at Byrath is in the Magadhî dialect, another offshoot from the Sanskrit. Professor Lassen anticipates the effectual restitution of the later Indian history from the deciphering of inscriptions "of which the greater part lie in manuscript in the London libraries. . . . The proportionate number of inscriptions received from the various parts of India proves that the Dekhan is far more copiously represented by inscriptions than northern India." They ought to be "arranged by a scholar possessing all the requisite learning, and published; which, however, could only be done if the Indian Government would determine on supporting the undertaking. But this will probably remain a pious wish unfulfilled; although that government lies under a much greater obligation to do so than the French to exert itself for the publication of the cuneiform inscriptions, or the Prussian Academy of Sciences to interest itself for the collection and elaboration of the Greek and Latin."\*

On the question why the Indians are so strikingly destitute of historical writings, Lassen distinguishes with justice between the Brahmanical Indians and the Buddhists, and observes:

"Among the former Brahmans alone could have been the historians; and it was they who had castes. But for castes there is no history; since nothing in their laws and conditions is subject to change, and a capacity for the conception of historic development therefore can never be formed within their minds. And two other circumstances combined to make the Brahmans little likely to care to work up any historic matter that lay before them into history. Their caste was composed of separate clans, and these of a great number of single families having no common head, the preservation of whose name and deeds might have proved a stimulus to historical description. Single families as such have no history; and only of the first fathers of the Brahmanical clans were traditions preserved, and these belonged to the mythic age. The constant contemplation of the stories of these men by their descendants chained their attention to those early times, and made them indifferent to the history of later years. And this indifference was heightened by a peculiar mental tendency of the Brahmans. For them the history of the gods possessed a much higher importance

\* Lassen, ii. 44.

than that of human kings. Their mind accustomed itself to regard the marvellous and unreal as natural and real; and the difference between the two was, if not eclipsed, at least obscured and faint, and the feeling for historic truth weakened. . . . The second circumstance to be noticed here is the inactive life of the Brahmans, and the tendency thereby encouraged towards the contemplation of the immutable and eternal, through the perception of which they hoped to be emancipated from the vicissitude of circumstance and repeated births, and to attain absolute rest."\*

Then :

"Although the Aryan Indians felt possessed of a nationality as against the Mlêcha, yet they had not the living consciousness of a national unity, because by their system of caste they were split into sectional divisions with separate interests. The Indian state resolves itself into a countless number of single village-communities, which have an independent existence, and take no interest in the general destinies of the country, so long as no innovation in the regulation of the imposts is forced upon them. Thus they were never educated into the consciousness of a common country;—a man's caste was his country. And a country having so vast an extent as India could never be subject to universal dominion. Great empires comprising a considerable number of single territories, such as those of the Maurya, and later of the Gupta, had no permanence."†

"A more favourable verdict must be passed on the historical literature of the Buddhists. . . . As the history of the life of the founder of their religion, of his disciples and followers who were human, and the fortunes of their doctrine, which aimed at the elevation of the conditions of human life, and was favourably received by many kings, form the contents of their writings called the simple Sûtras, we have in these narratives of real men and their actions, and delineations of actual life."‡

The periods into which Indian history naturally divides itself, with their subdivisions, can be both more concisely and more clearly presented in a tabular form than otherwise :

- I. India independent (till 1001 A.D.) :
  - i. Prebuddhistic (till 543 B.C.).
    - a. Vedic period.
    - b. Sanskrit period.
  - ii. Buddhistic and Postbuddhistic (543 B.C. to 1001 A.D.).
    - a. First period, till Vikramâditya (57 B.C.).
    - b. Second period, to the accession of the later Gupta and Bâl-labhi kings (318 A.D.).
    - c. Third period, to the Mohammedan invasion (1001 A.D.).
- II. India more or less under foreign rule :
  - i. Mohammedan rule (till 1744 A.D.).
  - ii. British rule.

\* Lassen, ii. 2-4.

† Ibid. ii. 5.

‡ Ibid. ii. 7.

The first or Vedic period retires into unknown antiquity; and its close is marked out by no monuments. But so great is the difference in the aspect of the Indo-Aryan nation between this period and the next, that it becomes necessary to regard them as separated by a broad chasm of centuries, which we are unable to trace connectedly; and to restrict the term *Sanskrit* civilisation to the following period. Hear Weber:

“The Indian literature passes for the earliest of which we possess the written documents; and with perfect justice, although the grounds hitherto usually assigned for this belief are not tenable. . . . The true grounds are the following. In the oldest parts of the *Rigvēda-Samhitā* the Indian nation appears settled on the north-western border of India, in the Penjāb, and spreading as far as the Kubbā or *Κωφὴν* in Kabul. The gradual extension of the nation from thence towards the East, beyond the *Sarasvati*, over Hindostan towards the *Ganges*, can be proved almost step by step in the later portions of the Vedic writings. The writings of the following period, the epic age, have to do with the contests of the conquerors of Hindostan among themselves (so the *Mahābhārata*), or with the further extension of Brahmanism towards the south (so the *Rāmāyana*). Then if with these we compare the first accurate accounts of India given by the Greeks, namely those of Megasthenes, it is evident that in his time the Brahmanisation of India was already accomplished. At the time of the *Periplus* even the southernmost point of the Dekhan was already the seat of a worship of the consort of *Çivā*. What a series of years—of centuries—must have been necessary to Brahmanise this immeasurable extent of country, inhabited by savage and powerful tribes!”\*

The religion of the Vedic period betrays a fresh openness of the mind to the glories of nature,—a sense of an irresistible divine force exerted by the powers of sun, thunder, fire, wind, water, and ether, over the face of nature, and over human life. It is earlier than mythology, properly so-called; it is reduced to no system: the relations of the different divine powers to one another are not yet defined, nor does any one of them as yet reign unquestionably supreme over the Indian Olympus; they appear as yet scarcely anthropomorphic and possessed of human passions and intellect, and much more as actual sun, thunder, and fire allegorised; they are moreover an acknowledgment of the supernatural power of *single* phenomena, which are as yet not subjected to any classification, nor referred to their true sources. Thus the Dawn, the Sunbeams, and the Sun himself in a multitude of various capacities, all appear as separate personalities. In a country bathed in such a flood of light as India, it need not surprise us to find adoration paid to *Ushas*, or Dawn. Where the sunbeams strike as fiery darts, they are naturally

\* Weber's *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 2.

imagined as heavenly horsemen. The thunder which, piercing the dense rolling masses of black clouds that come sailing along as precursors of the rainy season, causes the floods to descend upon the parched soil, is very naturally, and grandly too, regarded as the mightiest of the heavenly powers; he is Indra, the mighty, the wielder of the thunderbolt, with which he strikes the wicked demons who hold the waters of heaven confined. The sun must have excited a peculiar awe; for he appears not only simply as Sûrya or Savitri, but (with independent personality) as Mitra the noonday sun, and as Pûshan the nourisher, Bhaga the blessed, Aryaman the venerable; and there are besides twelve Âdityas or sun-gods. Fire (Agni) was one of the most favourite of the divine powers, to whom the greatest number of prayers were addressed. To him men mainly looked for food, for treasures, and for protection against enemies; and his mystic influence, consuming the offering upon the altar, was conceived to bear it aloft to the gods.

“The blessings prayed for are chiefly, as expressed by Professor Wilson, ‘of a temporal and personal description,—wealth, food, life, posterity, cattle, cows, horses, protection against enemies,’—selfish and often puerile petitions; but self-forgetting aspirations also find utterance, and a few indications there are ‘of a hope of immortality, hatred of untruth, and abhorrence of sin;’ and many an old Hindu, we may hope, has stood by his fire-altar at daybreak, offering up fervent adoration to the ‘God written in the heart,’ of which the altar-flames were to him the beloved household representation.”\*

The reverence for fire might lead us to suspect a close connection between the Vedic religion and the Bactrian or Zoroastrian; and, in truth, the commencement of the Vedic literature perhaps, the commencement of the Vedic civilisation certainly, reaches back to a time “when the Indo-Aryans still lived as one people with the Persic Aryans,”† probably in Bactria, on the western frontier of India; a time impossible to fix by exact dates, but which can scarcely be more recent than 1500 B.C. Especially important and interesting is it to notice, that before the purer form of fire-worship introduced by Zoroaster, the objects of worship in Persia, which it was found impossible afterwards entirely to supplant in the veneration of the people, were such beings as Mitra and Indra (Vritrihan), (Persian Mithra, Verethraghna), that is to say, the old Vedic gods.‡ This is a brilliant instance in which the inductions of comparative philologists from the evidence of language alone subsequently receive the ratification of history.

\* Mrs. Speir, p. 61.

† Weber's Lit., p. 4.

‡ Haug, in *Zeitsch. der deut. morgenl. Gesellschaft*, vol. ix. p. 687.

The next period of Indian history introduces us to a widely different scene. The language is scarcely the same; the religion is a vast growth of centuries round the old Vedic religion as a trunk, which has nearly rendered the trunk invisible; the social system is utterly different. Here Indra occupies no longer the highest place in Olympus; he and all his heavenly host, dethroned from their high estate to make room for younger gods, are become deities of a second order, and the term *déva* (dens), though not yet brought down so low as the Persian *dev* (evil genius, demon), yet no longer indicates heavenly supremacy. The acknowledgment of different *orders* of gods implies the growth of a systematic mythology. Moreover, the Indian had now attained to the consciousness that there is a power more mystical and more holy than the forces of nature; a power utterly different in kind; a power which enters the secret places of the human heart, and inspires pure thoughts and holy desires; a power which was from everlasting, before the fires of the sun had been kindled; a power which supports the universe in its place; a power which alone knows why and how this world exists. This Soul of the universe is Brahmā (neuter gender), and the human soul appears to be a portion of it. Filled with wonder at the discovery, the Hindu describes the incomprehensible nature of the soul in paradoxes: "the soul is the smallest of the small, the greatest of the great; although without motion, it seems to go to furthest space; though it resides in the body at rest, yet it seems to move everywhere." The Brahmā being the soul, and consequently inspirer, director, of the universe, the powers of nature cannot of course retain the supremacy which was theirs in the earlier part of the Vedic age. Still, as the Brahmā is essentially a philosophical conception, it never appears in the popular religion; and being universally diffused, and consequently impersonal, cannot receive any ceremonial worship, nor be represented by images. The conception of the Brahmā took its rise in the later part of the Vedic age, and is copiously discoursed of in the later hymns, and especially in the later treatises appended to the Vedas. It was from these works that Rammohun Roy discovered that "the Veds and Purans repeatedly declare the unity of the Supreme Being, and direct mankind to adore Him alone."\* This is, of course, quite false if understood of the older hymns; but Rammohun Roy, being an Indian, was not likely to discover a discrepancy between the doctrines of different parts of the Indian Scriptures, and therefore the relative antiquity of the parts was not perceived by him. A beautiful proof that the thought (of the Brahmā), when it first arose, was in advance of the language, which was powerless to

\* Translation of the principal books of the Veds, p. 88. London, 1832.



express any thing so lofty, is that at first it was simply called THAT (tat), in the neuter gender; and this gives great probability to Windischmann's explanation, adopted by Lassen, of the mytic syllable *óm* (i. e. a + u + m), from the obsolete *avam* (that), as in Zend, *aom* from *avəm*.\* The neuter gender of the Brahmā is very expressive of the idea of universally-diffused essence, permeating and inspiring, but creating nothing, and performing no action. While the neuter Brahmā is a kind of *πνεῦμα ἄγιον*, and at least closely resembles the "Spirit of God" that "moved upon the face of the waters," the same word Brahmā, in the masculine, denotes the active Creator, the *δημιουργὸς θεός*.

Whilst the religion of philosophical thinkers had undergone a complete transformation through the perception of the Brahmā, the popular religion had not stood still; the old gods were now regarded with a familiarity and levity reminding us of the unlucky adventures of Ares and Aphrodite in the Iliad, and new deities had attained to a supremacy unknown to the earlier Vedic religion :

"At the time of the composition of the Mahābhārata, the veneration for the old gods (*dēva*) was greatly weakened, and the consciousness of heroic force on the other hand immensely strengthened;" for "even the *Dēvas* could be vanquished by human heroes. The world of *Dēvas* is parted by no sharp line from that of men; the demigods often live upon the earth, and even the gods appear to men, and the latter can visit Indra in his heaven."†

The new gods who have attained to the highest place in the popular religion are Vishṇu, Śiva, and Brahmā (masculine gender). The latter is distinguished from the neuter Brahmā by the possession of a personal nature and creative power; he is the Supreme, the Creator, the Spiritual; for although corporeal and mundane when compared with the intangible ethereality of the neuter Brahmā, towards Vishnu and Śiva he appears as the Spiritual God, enthroned in highest heaven, and not stooping to enjoy earthly life and mix with men as they do; and consequently less frequently sought by men. Vishṇu and Śiva were each the Creator and the Supreme to their respective sects: Vishṇu, from being a sun-god, having attained the supremacy in the divine heaven which the sun has in the natural; and Śiva having been a representation of physical fertility and organic growth. We find in the case of Vishnu the idea springing up of the godhead assuming human form and appearing among men when the world requires purification from evil. The development of this idea, which led to the belief in *ten* incarnations of Vishṇu, belongs to a later age; and Krishṇa, who was afterwards

\* Lassen, i. 775, note 3.

† Ibid. i. 773.

regarded as the eighth *avatāra*, in which the god appeared on earth invested with his entire divinity, is in the original text of the Mahābhārata simply a human warrior. Çiva appears to have enjoyed the most widely-extended veneration; and was a mighty but beneficent deity, and not yet the awful destroyer which he subsequently became. The amalgamation of Brahmā, Vishnu, and Çiva, into a Trimūrti or Triunity (represented to the eye with three heads on one neck), Brahmā being the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Çiva the Destroyer, belongs to a later age, and owes its origin to the desire of accommodating the veneration paid to Vishnu and Çiva by their respective worshippers as the Supreme, with the Indian notion of One Supreme, and with the previous acceptance by more philosophic minds of Brahmā as that Supreme.

The social system had undergone a yet more marvellous change. Instead of a people chiefly pastoral, whose prayers are for the increase of their herds, and with whom the cow is the metaphor for abundance; a people inhabiting the open country, —we have a settled nation, possessing agriculture, arts, and commerce, living in cities advantageously situated on great rivers, and acquainted with the splendours of kings' courts. Instead of Kabul and the Penjāb, now the Yamunā (Jumna) and Ganges, and the cities of Ayōdhyā (Oude), Hâstinapura and Indraprastha (Delhi) are the chief seats of empire and civilisation. Instead of comparative freedom to all to call upon the Divine name and offer sacrifices, we have now a priesthood as a definite office; instead of a life of natural freedom, we have the social restrictions and ritual ordinances, affecting every act of life, of the Brahmanical law and the caste system. The caste system, however, does not spring into full life at once, for in the earliest times it is spoken of as not being hereditary; and as Mrs. Speir acutely observes (p. 138):

“The Rāmāyana is a tale of the Solar races, the Mahābhārata of the Lunar races; and we are inclined to believe that Brahmanical dominion was far more powerful with the Solar kings at Ayōdhyā than it ever became with Lunar dynasties. In the Rāmāyana, Solar kings reign in the orderly manner prescribed by the Code; Brahmans guiding political councils, and kings commanding armies. But in the Mahābhārata, on the other hand, the Lunar tribes at Hâstinapura and Dwāraka carry on wars at the pleasure of the kings and people with little or no reference to Brahmans.”

From this the most natural inference would appear to be, not Mrs. Speir's, that “we seem to have lost the Brahmanical civilisation previously attained, and to be thrown back upon the Vedic period, when priests were warriors, and warriors priests”

(p. 139); but Weber's (p. 181), that the Mahābhārata is the earlier poem of the two.

These two great epics are the Iliad and Odyssey of the Hindus. Like these Greek epics, and to a much greater extent than is now admitted of them, the Mahābhārata is the product of the age, or rather of a succession of ages, and not of a single poet. It abounds with discrepancies both with itself and with the age at which the major part was written; and the inserted episodes, which have nothing to do with the main action, take up more than three-fourths of the whole poem. They are only loosely attached to the poem, and are now admitted to be of later origin. This convinces us that the original poem was intended to be a *corpus* of traditional history, which attracted to itself the stories of different provinces and times as they became current. Like the Iliad, the Mahābhārata is a heroic story, and sings of arms; and if Arjuna is but a feeble likeness of Achilles, Karna may perhaps boast something of the virtues of a Hector. Like the Odyssey, the Rāmāyana is a tale of wandering; and like it, it relates wonders which belong only to fairy mythology. In extent there is no comparison between the Indian and the Greek epics. The Iliad contains 15,694 lines: the Mahābhārata is said to contain more than 100,000 distichs, and the Rāmāyana 24,000. The Rāmāyana bears more the impress of the mind of a single and an accomplished poet; whereas the Mahābhārata rather appears as the product of the collective mind of the age. On this account Weber perhaps correctly, in opposition to Lassen, assigns to the former a later date. The final elaboration of the Mahābhārata into the form in which we have it, Lassen assigns to the period between Aśoka I. and Candragupta i. e. between 261 and 335 B.C.

The Mahābhārata relates the contest for the throne of Hastinapur between the Pandava Kauravas (descendants of Kuru) and the Kāshirava Kurukshetra sons of Pandu, who were cousins. The Pandavas are the favourites of the poet; and in the end, all the Kauravas having been killed in a fearful battle of eighteen days, they are left victorious. There is considerable individuality of character in the heroes: Yudhishthira, the eldest Pandava, is a calm, judicious person, who leads and supports his younger brothers; Bhishma, the second, is remarkable for strength; and Arjuna, the third, is full of enthusiasm and affection, exulting in every martial exercise, and winning all hearts.\* The moral condition, by which Draupadi, the heroine, though in her youth, becomes the wife of all five Pan-

\* In a sign of her noble manners adopted from

one of the Pandavas, and is a circumstance odious to

\* See Spec. p. 136.

Brahmanical commentators, and quite uncountenanced by Brahmanical institutions ;”\* Weber would probably use it as an argument for the greater antiquity of the Mahābhārata. It certainly stands in striking contrast to the devoted and heroic faithfulness of Sītā, the wife of Râma, the heroine of the Râmâyana, who is tempted by Râvaṇa, the demon-king of Lankâ (Ceylon), and answers with scorn :

“ *Me wouldst thou woo to be thy queen, or dazzle with thine empire’s shine ?  
And didst thou dream that Râma’s wife could stoop to such a prayer as thine ?*

*I, who can look on Râma’s face, and know that there my husband stands,  
My Râma, whose high chivalry is blazoned through a hundred lands !  
What ! shall the jackal think to tempt the lioness to mate with him ?  
Or did the King of Lankâ’s Isle build upon such an idle dream ?”*

*Apud Mrs. Speir, p. 115.*

The Râmâyana, starting from Ayôdhyâ (the city of Oude) as the seat of empire, sings of the extension of the Aryan nation towards the south, through the wild forests of the Dekhan and into Lankâ (Ceylon). The hero Râma is the son of Daçaratha king of Ayôdhyâ, but he is in reality the seventh incarnation of Vishnu. Though destined to succeed his father on the throne, he is compelled to pass fourteen years in retirement in the forests of the Dekhan, in conformity to a promise extracted from his father by his stepmother ; and it is during this period of rustic retirement that Sītā is carried off by the demon-king of Lankâ. This occasions Râma’s romantic expedition to Lankâ ; when he is aided by Sugrîva the ape-king with an army of apes, commanded by Hanuman,—the latter a name adopted by modern naturalists. The bridge which they formed over the straits of Manaar by casting rocks into the sea, and by which they passed over to Ceylon, still exists as a reef, making the navigation of the straits dangerous, and is known as Râma’s bridge, though frequently called by the less interesting name of Adam’s bridge. Of course Sītā is recovered ; her fidelity is attested by the ordeal of fire, and she returns with her husband to live in peace and happiness at Ayôdhyâ. The apes are considered to represent the indigenous non-Aryan tribes of the Dekhan,—the Gônds, Bhills, and Kôls (Cooleys),—who are almost black, and would strike the Aryans as remarkably ugly and ape-like. In their expeditions through these untrodden wilds, the Aryans would naturally ally themselves to one of the native tribes whilst acting against another. The Râmâyana is rich in warm and genial descriptions of nature, and in all the simple virtues of a true-hearted uncorrupted people,—filial piety, conjugal fidelity, religious faith. One or two of the most touching passages

\* Mrs. Speir, p. 139.

are happily accessible to the English reader in Mr. Griffith's delightful translations.

The general features of the caste-system are well known, and its details would detain us too long. We will therefore merely state here that the castes introduced at this early period are the four original ones only; and that the innumerable mixed castes at present existing in India are of quite modern growth. The four original castes are: 1. *Brahmans*, who acted as priests, counsellors of kings, poets, instructors in religion, arts, and arms, and contemplative philosophers, hermits, and ascetics of various grades. 2. *Xatriyas*, warriors, to which caste kings belonged. 3. *Vaiçyas*, who were the great body of the Aryan population, including tillers of the ground, graziers, traders, and usurers. These three castes alone were invested with the sacred cord, which gave them "regeneration," and admitted to the study of the sacred books (*Vêdas*). 4. *Çûdras*, or the servile class, whose prime duty in life was to serve the three higher castes, yet who were not reduced to personal slavery. They were not invested with the sacred cord, and consequently not admitted to the study of the sacred books; they were judicially debarred from performing any religious rites which were believed to result in absorption in the divine essence; they were excluded from education, and of course from holding civil and judicial functions. From this condition, so vastly inferior to what we might expect an intelligent race like the Aryan to be able to condemn any of their brethren to, it is with great probability conjectured that the Çûdras were the remains of the indigenous non-Aryan population subjected by the Aryan conquerors.\*

The third, or Buddhistic, age appears in sharp contrast to both the foregoing,—most notably to the last, against which it was a reaction. In so far as the Brahmans had regarded sanctity as attained by meditation on the Brahmă, and as consisting in liberation from the bonds of passion and sense; and had considered the human soul as a portion of the universal soul imprisoned within the world of phenomena, and emancipation from this prison, involving freedom from repeated births in mortal bodies, as leading to absorption in the divine essence;—Buddhism was simply a further development of the same idea. But inasmuch as Brahmanism implied caste, and caste conceded this emancipation to the three higher divisions of the body-politic alone, and admitted the highest of these alone—the Brahmans—to be instructors on religious subjects, and to practise religious contemplation, Buddhism was a Protestant reaction. And this

\* The Spartan state presents an analogy to a Brahmanical state without Brahmans; for the *Σπαρτιᾶται* are the *Xatriyas*, the *Δάκωνες* or *πελοῖκοι* the *Vaiçyas*, and the *Ἐλλῶτες* the *Çûdras*.

is its moral significance, and the secret of its original success in India, and subsequent gigantic spread in Tibet, China, Ceylon, and Further India. Acknowledging castes simply as an existing political institution, it received all men, of every colour, rank, and sex, to instruction in its highest truths, in religion acknowledging spiritual gradations of sanctity only; and when extending itself to other unbrahmanical lands, it nowhere caused the *introduction* of caste. To Brahmanism, where the Brahmans alone were permitted to meditate on the spiritual essence of deity, the polytheistic mythology, with its three great gods and its numberless inferior Dévas, was natural as the religion of the uninitiated multitude; but with these Buddhism, allowing the loftiest contemplation to all, could dispense. They were not, however, to be easily loosened from their long hold on the Indian mind; and still subsisted, though in diminished glory,—the Dévas remaining as a kind of genii, and Brahmâ himself being subordinate to the founder of Buddhism. And in progress of time a very complex system of Buddhistic hagiology grew up, rivalling the polytheism of the older mythology. Again, Buddhism is opposed to the Vedic religion as a spiritual system is to an unsystematised worship of the powers of nature. And to both stages of the older religion Buddhism stands most distinctly opposed, as a world-religion to a national. The older religion was first a specially-Indian conception of the forces of the physical world as living agents; and later, when it raised itself to more spiritual contemplation, it was bound to a peculiar social system, and pledged to withhold its higher doctrines not only from strange nations, but even from the commonalty of its own nation. Buddha, regarding spiritual worth alone, naturally overstepped the limits of nationality; and his followers, carrying their spiritual truths into distant nations, and propounding them in foreign tongues, are the first grand example the world has seen of missionary energy—of missionary self-sacrifice for spiritual truth.

Why, then, did Buddhism, after a few centuries of astonishing success, yield to the ultimate greater vitality of the Brahmanism it had supplanted, and cease to be the religion of the Aryan race in India; and why, in the greatly inferior north-Asiatic races with whom it has subsisted, has it degenerated into formalism and atheism? Mrs. Speir's remarks in answer to this question are so much the truest and most beautiful things we have seen on the subject, that we cannot resist transcribing some of the most pregnant sentences:

“ Because, we answer, Buddhist morals are like gathered blossoms,—flowers cut away from the root of morals. A Buddhist teacher acknowledges no superior; and if the Edicts are too liberal for Brahmans,

they are also too independent of Almighty power. Brahmans taught in the name of Brahmá, and looked reverently on the Sun and the Dawn, on the Fire and the Flood, as tokens of supreme and universal soul. But the Edicts\* claim no higher authority than that of the king who proclaims them; he has cast aside the gods of the Védas, and has not yet deified the memory of Buddha. All previous worship had been swept away, and teaching alone offered in its place. No Agni, no Indra, no Íçvara, under any name, was worshipped; for Buddhism, not content with proclaiming the equality of men, imagined the same equality to pervade the universe. . . . The first feeling of popular Buddhism seems to have implied a cry of 'Down with the Brahmans! all beings are equal! let gods and men start fair!'" (pp. 364-5.) "We have Buddhist literature;—and this is positively repulsive; a formal, conceited, extravagant tone pervades the whole. . . . Eternal rest, or *nirvāna*, is to be obtained by the extinction of natural emotions. We entirely lose, therefore, the generous love and devotion of the Brahmanical tales; here there is no love conquering death, or brethren emulous of suffering for each other. . . . A Buddhist teacher is never himself a learner,—his sole object is to prove and explain. . . . The countenance of the true poet, while at work, is that of one listening or receiving. To the Sanskrit bards this attitude is not unknown; but Buddhists never listen and never 'look up.' The first act of their infant Buddha, according to their admiring chronicle, was to take seven steps upon the earth, and shout forth, 'I am the most exalted on the earth!'" (p. 367.)

"Çākya (Buddha) sought for God, although he knew not that it was for God he sought; and with all the power and energy of which man is capable, he devoted his whole being to the pursuit; and he found God in a degree far exceeding that usually vouchsafed to man, but it was unconsciously. He knew that there was something better than earth could give; he knew that benevolence and duty were better than human reward, whether in this world or in a future state; and he knew that he was aspiring above all the gods and the demigods of the popular creed. But he knew not the voice that taught him; he knew not that 'God drew him,' therefore he did not teach his disciples to watch and seek as he had done; therefore he used no prayer, and taught no prayer, and bade his disciples look no higher than himself; and therefore no sooner was his influence removed than the whole system began to degenerate into self-glorification and lying hypocritical cant. Had Çākya known that duty was the law of God, and that the *nirvāna* for which he yearned was going home to God, he might have saved millions of men from idolatry; but such knowledge was utterly beyond his reach. We may believe that his unconditional surrender of *himself* to duty gave him a clear perception of right and wrong; he never thought of reward for himself, and abandoned every lighter wish for that which he believed to be *right*; and, as we believe, he trusted implicitly that this would lead to eternal

\* The Edicts of the Buddhist king Açōka or Piyadāsi, mentioned above, which were inscribed on rocks and pillars.

union with the Eternal Essence of the Universe ; but this was not what he taught. True to the conceit and self-sufficiency of his age and country, he believed that he had wrested a secret from the Eternal ; his clear and fresh perception of right and wrong he looked upon as a spell, which he could communicate to others, and thus enable his followers to attain the advantages he had gained, without enduring the painful, tedious, and self-denying probation which he had endured." (pp. 288-289.)

"We could almost fancy that, before God planted Christianity upon earth, He took a branch from the luxuriant tree and threw it down in India. It was from the Tree of Truth, and therefore it taught true morality and belief in future life : but it was never planted, therefore it never took root, and never grew into full proportions ; and it was *thrown* upon earth, not *brought*, and though man perceived it heaven-born, he knew not how to keep it alive. When its green leaves drooped, he stiffened them and stifled with varnish ; and soon, although bedizened with tinsel, it shrank into formal atheism or dead idolatry." (p. 265.)

The age of Buddha is especially to be noted as the earliest commencement of any thing like connected history. Bimbisâra, king of Magadha, whose capital was Râjagriha, was Buddha's patron ; he was murdered and succeeded by Ajâtaçatru, who began his reign in hostility to Buddha, but was converted, and became most noted for his faith. The names of the next following kings are confused ; the first worth noting is Kâlâçôka, or Açôka I., who removed the royal residence to Pâtâliputra (Patna), and in whose reign the second Buddhistic synod was held (b.c. 443). He was followed by his nine brothers, who were supplanted by the nine kings of the Nanda dynasty. The last Nanda was murdered and supplanted by an adventurer named Candragupta, of whose low origin and surprising elevation many tales are told. His dynasty is called the Maurya, and it came to rule over a powerful empire.

The date of Candragupta is the first date in Indian history which was decisively fixed, and that through Sir W. Jones's discovery that he is the Sandrocottus (more correctly written by Athenæus Sandrakoptus) of the Greek writers, who was contemporary with the immediate successors of Alexander, if not with Alexander himself ; for he formed an alliance, both political and matrimonial, with Seleucus Nicator ; and the latter appears to have relinquished to him some territories beyond the Indus. His reign lasted from 315 to 291 b.c. Counting backwards from this point, we can arrive at an approximate date for Buddha, and are at once preserved from such gross exaggerations of antiquity as are to be found in old books, which frequently refer him to 2000 b.c. Lassen, after consulting the enormously dis-



crepant chronologies of the northern and southern Buddhists; and testing them by what extraneous evidence we have, places Buddha's death 540 B.C., and therefore his birth, 660 B.C. Weber, however, whose tendency seems to be to diminish the antiquity of every thing Indian later than the Vêdas, places his death 370 B.C.; and therefore, we must suppose, discredits the list of kings who have to intervene between Ajâtaçatru and Candragupta.

After Candragupta's son, Vindusâra (291-268 B.C.), reigned the celebrated Buddhist king Açôka II., called on inscriptions Piyadâsi. His reign lasted till 226 B.C., and in it was held the third Buddhistic synod, 246 B.C. The empire, the nucleus of which was Magadha, now extended over the greater part of India except the Dekhan: it included Râshtrika (Guzerat), Côla, Pîda, and Kalinga (extending down the Coromandel coast), Gandhâra (in the Penjâb), and Kambôga (west of the Indus); and he conquered Kaçmîra (Cashmeer). His inscriptions, which have been mentioned before, afford another fixed point in the chronology; for they name as contemporary kings Antiochus II., the Seleucid, who died 247 B.C.; Ptolemy II., Philadelphus, who died 246 B.C.; and Antigonus Gonatas, who died 239 B.C.

The empire of Açôka fell asunder after his death; and a King Pushpamitra, who founded the Çunga dynasty about 178 B.C., we are told, persecuted Buddhists; so early begins the counter-movement. He reunited, however, a large part of Açôka's dominions under his sway, and his dynasty expired in 66 B.C. The Simha dynasty, which bore rule in Râshtrika, with Simhapura (near Ahmedabad) for a capital, is known only by the evidence of coins and one inscription; yet it appears to have possessed a powerful empire in the west and north-west of India. It subsisted from 157-67 B.C., and is remarkable as apparently tributary to the Greek kings of Bactria. The chief interest attaching to the discovery of this dynasty is, that it fills up a gap, and prepares the way for a king whose memory has never been suffered to perish, but whose antecedents were utterly unknown—Vikramâditya, king of Mâlava, whose capital, Ujjâyinî (Ougein), was the home of poetry and romance, attracted thither by the monarch's liberality. This king commenced his reign in 57 B.C., and appears to have conquered Kaçmîra and Surâshtra (Guzerat, Cattiar), and probably the Penjâb; his great popularity is believed to have arisen from victories which delivered India from the yoke of the Indo-Scythians (Çaka). The poet Kâlidâsa, the author of Çakuntala and other still-existing plays and lyric poems, which are the true gems of Sanskrit literature, is said to have been one of the nine jewels in King Vikramâditya's crown, and this has hitherto been one of the few sheet-anchors in Indian

literature, that might be held to while all other dates went drifting. But Lassen and Weber show the insufficiency of the grounds on which this has been held, and even its incredibility; the former assigning the poet to the second half of the second century of the Christian era, and the latter apparently leaning to a considerably later date. This correction of the chronology, as Weber well observes, makes it no longer certain, as Sir W. Jones believed, that the Indian drama is perfectly indigenious; it may have been learned from the Greek-Bactrian kings, upon and even within the frontiers of India; more especially as the Indian dramas are discovered to belong to the west of India, and most of all to Málava, which formed a part of the dominions held by the Simha viceroys under the Greeks. Still, even if the Hindus should have received their first idea of the drama from scenic representations at the court of the Greek kings, it cannot be denied that they have so transformed it that the finished Indian play bears a very indigenious impress, and betrays nothing of its origin. The Greek play was a religious ceremony performed in honour of Dionysus; the Sanskrit is a purely secular amusement, to which, indeed, solemnity is given by the invocation of a god at the commencement, but which bears no relation to any worship. The Sanskrit play knows nothing of the unities, nor of a limitation in the number of actors. Indeed its freedom of construction reminds one much more of the English drama than of the Greek. The use of the popular dialects for the speech of persons of inferior rank, moreover, may be compared with the Welsh pronunciation of Fluellen and Sir Hugh Evans; and the free employment of prose or verse according to the elevation of the theme, reminds one more of the modern opera than of the Greek drama.

After Vikramâditya's son, who reigned till about the commencement of our era, darkness again obscures the picture; through which, by the dim light afforded by coins, we discover that India is divided among a multitude of not very powerful rulers, and that a foreign and barbarian power, the Indo-Scythian (Yu-chi), reigns in Kaçmîra. This dynasty is represented between A.D. 10 and 40 by a prince of brilliant fame and great ability, Kanerki, or Kanishka, who to a greatly extended empire in India united a vast one in Central Asia. His ancestors had wavered between Mithraic, Çaiva, and Buddhist worship. Kanerki, at first repelling Buddhism, became a convert, and enthusiastic for the spread of his new faith. Under him the fourth and last great Buddhistic synod was held in Kaçmîra; convents, colleges, and *chaityas*, were founded, and missionaries sent out. The other Indian rulers of this age were sometimes

Buddhistic, and sometimes Brahmanical; but Buddhism was fast losing ground.

We next come to the important dynasty of the Gupta kings. Their sway lasted from 150-318 A.D., and was the most glorious ever wielded by native princes in India. Their capital was probably Sâkêta (Ayôdhyâ, Oude), and their original domains east of the Ganges. They are said to have been Vaiçyas (of the third caste); which, being quite contrary to the code, implies a kind of social revolution, whereby the lower classes seized upon the privileges of the higher. Although Brahmanical in religion, and giving through their personal influence an impulse to Brahmanism, they accorded an enlightened toleration to Buddhists. The first king, Gupta, had probably been the satrap of a king Vikramâditya, who founded an empire at Çrâvastî about 150 A.D.; and either he or his son Ghatôtkaca made himself independent. The third king, Candragupta I. (crowned 168 A.D.), extended his dominions, and took Eastern Mâlava. Samudragupta (crowned 195 A.D.) made all Northern India as far as Bengal tributary; and was evidently as politic as he was great, his system being to confirm the princes of Northern India, a mountainous and easily defensible region, in their possessions, at the same time making them tributary to himself; and to let the princes of the Dekhan, a region still more inaccessible to conquest, simply feel his power, and to encourage them to resort to him for the settlement of their disputes. He was a great patron of the fine arts and letters; and to his reign, perhaps the most brilliant period of Sanskrit literature, are probably to be referred many of the poets and poems currently ascribed to that of Vikramâditya. His son, Candragupta II. (crowned 235 A.D.), added Kaçmîra to his empire; and Candragupta's son, Kumâragupta, or Skandagupta (reigned 240-270 A.D.), also Surâshtra; after whom the empire apparently declined, and events (including a short usurpation of independence at Pâtaliputra) are obscure, until in 319 the Guptas are supplanted by the Bâllabhi dynasty in Guzerat. Upon the next age we have not space to enter; nor would it be easy to give of it even as slight a sketch as the foregoing, deprived as we are at this point of the guidance of Professor Lassen.

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## ART. V.—THE PHASIS OF FORCE.

*The Correlation of Physical Forces.* By W. R. Grove, Q.C., M.A., F.R.S., &c. Third edition. London: 1855. 8vo, pp. 229.

*On the Mutual Relations of the Vital and Physical Forces.* By William B. Carpenter, M.D., F.R.S., F.G.S., &c. "Philosophical Transactions, 1850."

*The Phasis of Matter; being an Outline of the Discoveries and Applications of Modern Chemistry.* By T. Lindley Kemp, M.D. 2 vols. London: 1855. Post 8vo, pp. 558.

*The Chemical and Physiological Balance of Organic Nature.* By MM. Dumas and Boussingault, Members of the Institute of France. Third edition, translated from the French. London: 1844. Feap. 8vo, pp. 156.

THAT "there is nothing new under the sun," is an apophthegm more applicable to matter than to mind, and more truly represents the results of physical inquiry than those of an attentive survey of the moral history of man. For in the latter, progress is the rule; whilst retrogression can scarcely be called an exception, so seldom is it real. But in the Cosmos, cyclical repetition every where seems to prevail. The alternation of day and night gives us our first and simplest experience of this revolution; the succession of the seasons our next: and although no one diurnal period is divided exactly like that which precedes or that which follows it, and although in no two succeeding years do spring, summer, autumn, and winter follow precisely the same course; yet when terms of sufficient length are compared, minor irregularities disappear, the general averages become wonderfully accordant, and limits are marked out beyond which we need not expect any aberration. As the earliest astronomers learned to predict eclipses by comparison of their recurring cycles, so those disturbances in the movements of the planets, and that displacement of even the sun himself, which the theory of universal gravitation predicts as its necessary results, and which modern observation shows really to occur, have the law impressed upon them, "thus far shalt thou go, and no further;" being found by computation to pass through a cycle, whose duration, though capable of being expressed in figures, cannot be definitely conceived by the mind.

Not less obvious is this tendency to cyclical repetition in the changes which are constantly taking place in the substance of our globe, and in the living inhabitants of its surface. Of the aggregate of these changes, the oscillations of the magnetic

needle may, in some degree, be taken as an expression ; and the variations which are discernible in these, by careful and continuous observation, are found to be eminently cyclical. Besides diurnal, monthly, and annual variations of considerable regularity, which are traceable to changes in the place of the sun and moon, but which are occasionally interrupted by "magnetic storms" that put the compasses in different parts of the world into simultaneous agitation, there is a variation of very constant rate in the northward and southward pointing of the compass, between certain extreme easterly and extreme westerly limits, which extends over a cycle of centuries ; and there can be no doubt that this is indicative of some correspondingly regular change in the interior of the globe ; though as to its nature, only the vaguest speculations can at present be offered.

If now, with the geologist, we examine the structure of such parts of the solid crust as lie within reach of our scrutiny, the evidence of cyclical change seems at first sight to fail us ; for according to the current hypothesis, whilst the original molten mass nearly uniform in its consistence and composition, gradually losing heat from its exterior, has been skinned over (as it were) with a solidified shell, the structure of that shell has been so modified by physical, chemical, and vital agencies, that its substance has been gradually differentiated into a series of layers, dissimilar both in mineral structure and in chemical composition ; and this without any apparent tendency to return to its original homogeneity. Yet when we examine the successive stages of this progress, we find in every part that the disturbing agencies have acted in cyclical periods, and that one cycle has been very much the repetition of another. The two great opposing agencies, fire and water, have been in antagonistic operation from the first. The one has been continually upheaving, the other yet more constantly degrading. The one has fused together minerals of the most dissimilar nature into formless masses ; the other has not only worn these down and deposited them in successive layers, but has also separated their components in various ways ; so that we find clays and sandstones, slates and limestones, shales and conglomerates, interstratified with more or less of regularity. And the more carefully the history of these deposits is studied, the more does it become apparent that they owe their existence to frequently-recurring series of changes, essentially the same in their nature, though modified in their results both by what has preceded and what has followed them.

Throughout the whole, one thing remains unchanged,—the absolute quantity of each of the elementary forms of matter ; for whatever may be the new chemical combinations into which they

enter, whatever the new physical arrangements to which they are subjected, their aggregate is the same now as it was at first. Every speculative philosopher is ready to admit the axiomatic truth of the proposition, *Nihil fit ex nihilo*. And the converse, *Nihil fit ad nihilum*, would be at once recognised as a no less necessary part of our belief, if it were not apparently corrected by familiar experience. But the researches of modern chemistry have most clearly established, that in this point, as in many others, familiar experience is quite in the wrong; that the annihilation of matter is as impossible to man as its creation; and that in every instance in which such a destruction seems to be effected, there is in fact nothing but a change of form. Thus the children of every primary school are now taught,—what was a new fact to the greatest philosophers no more than seventy years ago,—that in every act of ordinary combustion, the disappearance of the combustible is simply due to the formation of new compounds between its elements and the oxygen of the air, and to the diffusion of these compounds through the atmosphere; the decay of organised bodies being merely a slower kind of combustion, whose products are essentially the same in kind, and are disposed of in like manner. When we inquire into the nature and origin of either class of substances, we find that this dissemination of their materials through the atmosphere, merely restores to it what was originally taken from it by the agency of living beings; thus completing a cycle whose marvellous nature requires a somewhat fuller consideration.

The component elements of all vegetable and animal structures are essentially the same; namely, oxygen, hydrogen, carbon, and nitrogen, with a larger or smaller proportion of certain saline substances, which for our present purpose we may leave out of consideration. Of these elements, the first three alone exist in starch, gum, cellulose, chlorophyll, sugar, oils, and many other “proximate principles” which abound in plants; and as the greater part of their fabric is made up of such principles, their chief constituent, carbon, is the characteristic element of the vegetable kingdom. All four, however, are united together in the albumen, fibrine, gelatine, and other materials of which the animal tissues are essentially composed; and thus nitrogen comes to be the characteristic element of the animal kingdom. It exists, however, universally in the growing parts of plants, the presence of an albuminous substance being essential in them, as in animals, to the formation of new tissue; while the production of albuminous compounds, which are stored up in large amount in seeds and fruits, seems to be the chief end and aim of plant life.

Now whatever may be the amount of nutriment drawn by plants from the soil in which they grow, every vegetable phy-

siologist is aware that this is ultimately derived from the atmosphere. Many trees will thrive without any soil whatever; and others give back, by the decay of their successive crops of leaves, more than they take from it. It is only the removal of the products of a rapid herbaceous vegetation, that really exhausts a soil, by withdrawing from it more than is given back by decay *plus* that which is absorbed from the atmosphere during the process. But it is not by directly uniting the oxygen and nitrogen of the atmosphere, with carbon and hydrogen supplied by vegetable mould, that the starch, chlorophyll, and albumen, are made, which furnish the materials of the vegetable fabric. The plant seems only to have the power of combining these elements into ternary and quaternary compounds, when they are being disengaged in the nascent condition from the state of binary combination which is characteristic of the inorganic world. *Carbonic acid*, which does not ordinarily form more than one two-thousandth part of the atmosphere,—and *ammonia*, whose universal diffusion through the air is unquestionable, though its proportion is almost inappreciably small,—constitute, with *water*, the essential pabulum of vegetable existence; but it is only under the influence of Light, that their elements can be separated from each other and recombined into their new forms. The growing plant, exposed to sunlight, has a decomposing power for carbonic acid, such as no other chemical agent possesses; setting free the oxygen, it retains the carbon; and in the very same act, as it would appear, generates both starchy and albuminous substances by the union of this carbon with the elements of water and ammonia. Hence the effect of vegetation on the atmosphere is, to be continually diminishing its carbonic acid and ammonia, and at the same time to be augmenting its proportion of oxygen. Even during the most vigorous life of the plant, however, it restores a part of its carbon to the atmosphere by a process analogous to the respiration of animals, in which, by union with atmospheric oxygen, this carbon reassumes the form of carbonic acid. And when the term of existence, either of the whole fabric or of any part of it (as the foliage), has been completed, the dead tissue, if freely exposed to the contact of air and moisture, undergoes a gradual decay, and is at last resolved by a series of metamorphoses, in which atmospheric oxygen is largely consumed, into the three binary compounds at whose expense it was at first generated, namely, carbonic acid, water, and ammonia. But if air be partially secluded, the process of decay is less complete; various new compounds are formed, which are rich in carbon and hydrogen, but poor in oxygen, and are therefore eminently combustible: yet these have a character of permanence which indisposes them to spontaneous change; and thus

the products of the partial decay of a past vegetation may remain stored up in the depths of the earth for an unlimited period, until the ingenuity of man turns them to his own account. There are comparatively few to whom it occurs, when they are warming themselves over their winter-fire, or watching the fuel thrown into the roaring furnace of some vast steam-engine, that the combustion which cheers them by its genial glow, or generates a power of a thousand horses, is giving back to the atmosphere, in the form of carbonic acid and water, the identical carbon and hydrogen which were drawn from it by the luxuriant vegetation of the primeval world. Yet nothing is more certain than that all coal was once air, and that it was the flora of the carboniferous period which solidified it.

But the vegetable kingdom serves a higher purpose in the economy of nature than that of merely furnishing sources of artificial heat; for it supplies the materials out of which the animal body is constructed. In no particular is the distinction between the two great kingdoms of organic life more strong than in this, that the plant makes organic compounds, which the animal turns to its own account, and, in doing so, unmakes. It is for the use of the animal that certain plants generate such quantities of albuminous substances as can be turned to no conceivable use in their own economy. And it is only when applied to the construction of the several tissues of the animal fabric, especially the muscular and nervous, that these substances are made to fulfil their highest destiny,—that of becoming subservient to motion, sensation, and psychological action. Every one of these phenomena of animal life, however, essentially involves the restoration of a certain portion of organised tissue to the condition of inert matter. Death and decay are thus always going on within the animal body, the more rapidly as its life is more energetic; and hence, while its sustentation requires a continually-renewed supply of food, its healthful state can only be maintained by the unceasing elimination of its effete particles. These are got rid of by the various channels afforded by the excretory processes, of which respiration is the most important; and whatever may be the form in which the excretory products leave the body, they all resolve themselves ultimately,—as does the body itself, when at last nature claims her debt,—into water, carbonic acid, and ammonia.

The wonderful cycle of organic life in which the constituents of the atmosphere are thus made to pass through one living body after another, and are at last restored to it in their pristine state, is now presented on a small scale to the observation of every one in the aquaria which are becoming the fashionable ornaments of our drawing-rooms, and are affording an object of healthful interest to many who scarcely come into direct contact with nature



in any other way. Every self-sustaining aquarium ought to include three kinds of living beings, namely, plants, vegetable-feeding animals, and carnivorous animals: thus in a fresh-water tank we may have vallisneria, water-snails, and gold-fish; in a marine tank, some of the grass-green sea-weeds, anemonies, phytophagous gasteropods, and blennies or gobies. The plants will thrive in sunlight on the carbonic acid and ammonia diffused through the water; invisible diatoms, too, will increase and multiply at the expense of the same materials; the anemonies and the mollusks will support themselves on the vegetable diet thus prepared for them; their eggs and young serve to sustain the predaceous fish; and while the plants are continually imparting fresh oxygen to the atmosphere of the tank, this is as constantly consumed by its animal inhabitants, which are restoring to the water, during their whole lives, the carbonic acid and ammonia of which the plants deprived it.

We have thus referred to a few of the more striking and typical examples of the *phasis of matter*, for the purpose of introducing a kindred topic, the *phasis of force*; a subject to which many of the most advanced minds of our time are giving their profoundest attention, and which is continually increasing in interest, both from its ever-widening relation to physical phenomena, and from the luminous glimpses which are opened by its study into the most elevated regions of speculative inquiry.

Every thoughtful student of physical science must have been perplexed by the designation "imponderable forms of matter," which has been almost invariably applied in our text-books to light, heat, electricity, and magnetism. No one, so far as we are aware, has ever attempted to rank chemical affinity in this category, or has proposed to consider the force which produces or resists motion as an "imponderable." And it has been owing to this hypothetical severance of agencies which nature has very closely allied, that their real relationship, as disclosed by a study of their analogous influence on matter, has so long remained obscure. Of late years, however, there has been an increasing tendency to regard the former, like the latter, of the agencies just enumerated, as "modes of force;" and it is wonderful how many complex problems are rendered simple, how many obscure matters are made clear, how many doubtful questions are at once decided, by the adoption of this view, and of the consequences to which it directly tends. Not that it has yet been so completely worked out as to be entitled to take rank as a demonstrated doctrine: this could scarcely be accomplished for any scheme having ramifications so extensive, in many times the period that has elapsed since this was first formally proposed. But we may express the

aspect in which it presents itself to our own minds, by comparing it to the Copernican system, at a date when its credibility depended chiefly upon its inherent truthfulness and simplicity, as contrasted with the artificial complexity of rival doctrines,—the telescope not having yet afforded its triumphant confirmation to the bold assertions of the Polish sage.

Those philosophers who have laboured most successfully to determine the laws of the operation of the physical forces, have been impressed with the closeness of the relation which subsists between them all. Indications of a belief in their essential unity will be found, especially, in the various writings of Faraday. But the first systematic attempt to formularise the whole series of these mutual relations was made by Mr. Grove, who at that time held a professorship in the London Institution, in a course of lectures which he delivered before its members in the years 1842 and 1843. An outline of these lectures was published soon afterwards, and has been expanded in each subsequent edition. In the most recent (which has been reproduced in France by an eminent French *savant*, M. Séguin), we have found many new and interesting exemplifications of the doctrine of the "Correlation of the Physical Forces," which we shall now endeavour to make clear to our readers' comprehension.

When we turn from matter to force, from that which is moved to the power which moves it, from the mere passive corporeity to the animating *energeia*, it seems, to the purely abstract thinker, to be no less necessarily true in the second case than in the first, that as *nihil fit ex nihilo*, so *nihil fit ad nihilum*. Here again, however, we seem at first to encounter direct contradiction from daily experience. That force cannot originate of itself, is a proposition about which no two intelligent minds are likely to differ. But that force may cease to exist, may die out (so to speak) without leaving any trace behind, is a notion which the most familiar and oft-repeated observations concur to impress upon us. Every child knows that his top will only spin for a limited time, that his hoop will only roll over a limited space; and if he thinks about the matter at all, he believes that the force he has exerted spends itself in producing the result which alone is obvious to him. As a schoolboy, however, he is taught that his top would spin without ceasing, that his hoop would roll over an unlimited extent of level surface, if it were not for the two opposing powers of friction and resistance of the air; and he rests content with this knowledge, which seems to account for all that he sees to need explanation. But when the schoolboy is developed into the philosophic inquirer, he puts to himself the question, "What has become of the motion which friction and atmospheric resistance have seemed to annihilate?"—and

however plain the fact may be to his common sense, his philosophy is posed.

The answer to this question, as to many others of like kind, is found in the fact, that although the obvious motion of the mass is checked, this is replaced by changes in its own molecular condition, and in that of the surrounding matters, which manifest themselves under different forms, ordinarily those of heat and electricity. Thus, as every one knows, the production of heat is a necessary concomitant of friction. The savage kindles his fire by rubbing two pieces of wood together. The traveller in a railway-carriage runs the risk of being burned alive by the want of grease to its axles. And the philosophers of past days, who thought that heat was a material substance, of which only a certain measure could be contained in any body, were surprised to find that so long as friction was kept up, so long did the production of heat continue. In fact, theory and experiment now concur in the assertion, that heat and motion stand in a precise numerical relation one to the other; the retardation of mechanical movement produced by friction, being accompanied (when the friction takes place between homogeneous substances) by the manifestation of a definite equivalent of heat. So, again, every lad is taught that by rubbing a stick of sealing-wax on his sleeve he can make it attract light bodies, which phenomenon he is led to attribute to the excitation of a mysterious agent, termed the "electric fluid;" and when he goes home from school for the holidays, if he have any thing of a scientific turn, he is pretty sure to set to work to construct an electrical machine, which, with a bottle for the cylinder, may enable him to charge a Leyden jar with this fluid, and distribute shocks to his playfellows and domestics. But he is led to believe that the rubbing of his cushion against the glass merely serves to draw up the "electric fluid" out of the earth; and with this explanation he remains satisfied, until the sceptical philosopher comes in, and asks him what proof there is of the existence of a fluid at all, and whether electricity is any thing else than a molecular action of matter, which, like heat, takes the place of the sensible movement that is annihilated (to all appearance) by the friction. And he is able to allege in support of such a view, that the development of electricity is just as certain a consequence of retarded motion as is that of heat, provided only that the bodies which rub together are in any degree heterogeneous. In fact, there is no single action of our daily lives attended with any such loss of motion, in which electricity is not thus produced; the absence of any manifestation of it being simply due to the provisions which nature has made for the immediate diffusion of the excitement. The grinding of our coffee for breakfast may be made to give out sparks, if due care

be taken to insulate the apparatus; the obliteration of a pencil-mark with india-rubber has often, we doubt not, in the experience of our readers, produced a strong attraction between the paper that is rubbed and the leaf below it; and, in short, it has been shown by nicely-devised experiments, that it is only when the substances which are rubbed together are most perfectly homogeneous, not only chemically but physically (a condition which is only found to exist in the two fractured surfaces of a broken bar of metal), that electricity is *not* generated by friction. As with heat, so with electricity, there is no quantitative limit to the excitement; as long as the friction is maintained, so long may electricity be generated; and the reason why the cushion of the electrical machine needs to communicate with the ground, is not (as used to be supposed) that the electric fluid may be drawn up from its great reservoir, the earth, but that the high electric tension of the rubbing surfaces may be relieved; since without such relief the electric excitation cannot continue, a given surface being only able to hold (to use the common phraseology) a certain measure of electricity.

In these two cases, then, we have familiar examples of the manner in which the force which produces or resists motion is "correlated" to heat and electricity; and through these to the other physical agencies. As Mr. Grove states the case, "neither, taken abstractedly, can be said to be the essential or the proximate cause of the others; but either may, as a force, produce the others." If such a statement be objected to as a hypothetical assumption, we may limit ourselves to the simple expression of the experimental fact, that when any one of these forces, A, ceases to manifest itself, some other, as B, is developed in its stead; and that *vice versá*, when B ceases to manifest itself, either A is reproduced, or C, D, or E makes its appearance.—A better illustration of this principle can scarcely be offered, than that which is presented in the vaporisation of liquids. Every one knows, that after a kettleful of water has been raised by the heat of the fire from the ordinary temperature to the boiling-point, a much longer time is required to convert the whole of it into steam; and yet the steam is not hotter (as measured by the thermometer) than the boiling-water. In point of fact, about six times the quantity of heat is required to convert water at 212° into steam at 212° as was needed to raise that same amount of water from 60° to 212°. What becomes, then, of this heat? Dr. Black, finding that it all reappears again when the steam is condensed into water,—so that the vapour of any given quantity of water, in reassuming the liquid form, will raise six times the amount of water from 60° to 212°,—invented the very ingenious theory, which has until recently found universal acceptance among

chemists and physicists, that the heat consumed in vaporisation is metamorphosed from the "sensible" into the "latent" form; whilst, in the converse change of condensation, the latent heat of the vapour becomes sensible again. But this theory, whose elegance has probably been its chief attraction, takes no account whatever of the mechanical power which is generated when water is converted into steam,—the passive liquid, exhibiting no force but that of gravity, into the elastic fluid which exerts pressure on all that confines it. Whence does this power arise? Is it generated *de novo* by the same change which renders the heat latent? So, in the condensation of steam, what becomes of its mechanical force? Does it too pass into the "latent" form when the heat reappears under the "sensible" aspect? Surely it is far more simple and philosophical to discard the notion of latent force altogether, as a mere figment of the imagination, and to describe the phenomenon in the simple terms of fact, by stating that the heat applied to the vaporisation of water (or any other liquid) ceases to manifest itself *as* heat, but is replaced by an equivalent of mechanical force; whilst, in the condensation of steam, the elastic force ceases to act as such, and is replaced by its equivalent of heat, which communicates itself to other substances. If we go one step beyond this, and say that the heat is metamorphosed in the former case into mechanical force, and that in the latter mechanical force is converted into heat, we advance, it must be admitted, into the region of hypothesis; but surely such an hypothesis is far more logical and consistent than one which requires as its basis an existence that in the very nature of things cannot be proved, and gives no account whatever of one of the most essential phenomena involved in the change of state.

The vaporisation of liquids, however, is not the only way, in which heat gives rise to motion; since every case of that almost universal result of the application of heat to matter in any form, namely, its expansion, is an example of the same kind. Again, as heat occasions the separation of the particles of the substance to which it is applied, so does pressure, by occasioning their approximation, give rise to heat; as in the well-known experiment of lighting a piece of tinder by the sudden condensation of air in a syringe; or as a single blow of the hammer upon a piece of lead will make it hot enough to ignite phosphorus.

Thus we arrive at a purely dynamical theory of Heat, in which this power is regarded as consisting in a certain state of matter (probably some kind of molecular motion), not as arising from the action of an imponderable substance superadded to matter. And although there are apparent difficulties in the application of this hypothesis to facts with which every tyro in physics

is familiar, yet these difficulties, when closely examined, are found to arise chiefly out of that conception of heat which we derive from its direct subjective action upon our own consciousness; and they disappear when, putting aside this source of fallacy, we confine ourselves to the study of the objective changes which it produces in matter generally, as manifested by their change of form. Thus in the beautiful experiment of Thilorier, the freezing of a portion of liquefied carbonic acid into snow-like crystals, when another portion, by being relieved from the pressure under which it was previously restrained, undergoes sudden vaporisation, is just as well (if not better) explained on the dynamical theory of heat, as by the commonly-received doctrine, that the solidification of one part is due to the sudden withdrawal of the large measure of heat which becomes latent in the vaporisation of the rest. For the sudden expansion requires so great an amount of force, that in furnishing the demands of the expanding gas, certain other portions contract to such an extent as to solidify: thus we have reciprocal expansion and contraction going on in one and the same substance; the time being too limited for the whole to assume a uniform temperature, or, in other words, to undergo a uniform measure of expansion.

Some curious researches have been recently made as to the relative aptitudes of certain bodies for conducting heat in different directions, which show how much depends upon the molecular arrangement of the bodies themselves; and thus add to the probability, that heat is not, any more than motion, a distinct entity, but a state or condition of the body which exhibits it. Senarmont has shown, that in the case of crystals the direction of the axis of symmetry is that in which heat is most readily transmitted, whilst the direction of slowest transmission is perpendicular to the axis of symmetry; and Knoblauch has found the same rule to hold good with regard to the absorption of radiant heat. So it has been long known in regard to wood, that its conducting power is greater in a direction parallel to the fibre than in one transverse to it; and Dr. Tyndall has recently ascertained that the conduction is better in the radial than in the tangential line of the trunk,—that is, in the direction transverse to its concentric layers than in that which runs parallel to them; so that in the three possible directions in which the structure of wood may be contemplated, we have three different degrees of progression for heat. It is true that such facts as these are not irreconcilable with the view which regards heat as a “something” which can be put into matter or taken out of it, since this “something” may be conceived to travel more quickly or more slowly, in accordance with the facilities or the obstacles which it encounters in its movement; but it greatly simplifies

our conception of the facts, and gets rid of a great deal of not only unnecessary but erroneous hypothesis, when we give up the notion of heat as something capable of being insulated from ponderable matter, and of being measured, if not weighed, by itself. Every one knows that we cannot remove heat from any substance, and retain it for examination *as* heat. All we can do with it when we have got it, is to transmit it to some other substance than that which exhibits it; and in this transmission it may either pass unchanged,—in which case the body to which it passes becomes itself heated,—or it may be replaced by some other mode of manifestation, such as mechanical force or electricity. We only know, in fact, certain changes of matter, for which changes heat is a generic term; the *thing* heat is unknown; and there is no more valid reason for asserting that when a body is heated a certain imponderable form of matter is put into it, than we have for asserting that when we give motion to a ball we put some material thing into it which it did not possess before. Matter in motion is no doubt very different in its attributes from matter at rest; but it is still the same matter, and the difference lies merely in its dynamical as contrasted with its statical condition; just as our own consciousness tells us that any one of our mental faculties, or our whole mind together, may be either active or inert, impressing its energy on all the minds around it, or passively receiving the impressions made by them upon itself.

Electricity possesses the same kind of relation to motion, that we have seen heat to possess; for whilst it is developed, like heat, in almost every instance in which motion is retarded, it is itself capable of producing motion. This it may do in a great variety of modes; on which, as they are exhibited in every experimental lecture on electricity, we need not here dwell; preferring rather to bring forward certain less familiar phenomena, which tend to do away with the notion of a single or double “electric fluid” as a something separate from matter, and to show that what we call electrical phenomena are referable to dynamical conditions of the matter which exhibits them. What is the precise nature of those conditions, cannot be yet stated with more precision in the case of electricity than in that of heat. This much, however, is certain, that any definition of them must involve the idea of *polarisation*; that is, of attractions and repulsions in definite directions. And there is much evidence that the essence of electrical excitement consists in the development of this state of polarisation; just as the essence of caloric phenomena consists in the separation or approximation of the molecules of the bodies affected. Let us take, for example, the simple case of the decomposition of water, or any other compound substance, by

what is commonly called the voltaic current. In this case we have oxygen given off at one pole or electrode, and its equivalent of hydrogen at the other; and the question seems at first sight to be, at which of the poles the decomposition takes place, and which of the gases passes over towards the other; or whether it occurs midway, the hydrogen travelling in one direction and the oxygen in the opposite. Now as the most attentive scrutiny of the process fails to bring into view any such passage of gases, it has come to be generally admitted that the phenomenon is really to be explained by a decomposition and recomposition of every molecule of water intervening between the two poles; for when the circuit is completed, the two electrodes being oppositely polarised, the positive will attract the negative oxygen of its adjacent molecule of water; the hydrogen thus displaced unites with the oxygen of its contiguous molecule, which in its turn liberates its hydrogen to unite with the oxygen of the molecule beyond it; and so on to the negative pole, where, the last molecule of water being decomposed, its oxygen unites with the hydrogen of the preceding, and its hydrogen is liberated on the electrode. This polarising action may be simply represented thus:—a row of molecules of water, each represented by HO, being interposed between the electrodes,

*Negative electrode* HO, HO, HO, HO, HO, HO, *Positive electrode*

when the two electrodes are oppositely polarised by the completion of the circuit, the constituents of the series arrange themselves thus:—

*Negative electrode* H, OH, OH, OH, OH, OH, OH, O, *Positive electrode.*

Thus if electrolysis, or decomposition by electricity, were the only known electrical phenomenon, electricity would appear to consist in transmitted chemical action; for all the evidence we have is, that a certain affection of matter, designated as chemical change, takes place at certain distant points, the change at one point having a definite relation to the change at the other.

The phenomena of electrical induction again are equally consistent with the idea of molecular polarisation, whilst they are very difficult of explanation on that of a single or double fluid. Whenever an electrified body is brought into contiguity with another that is not electrified, even though a non-conducting medium be interposed, it tends to excite in the part of the other nearest to itself an electrical state opposite to its own; thus it is that in charging a Leyden jar, the outside coating becomes as strongly excited as the inside, although with opposite polarity. It was formerly supposed that the intervening substance was purely passive, and that the effects of induction depend upon the



repulsion of the electric fluid at considerable distances. But it has been shown by Faraday that the effects vary so much according to the nature of the interposed medium, that there is strong reason for referring the phenomena of induction to molecular polarisation of its substance. And this view is confirmed by the following beautiful experiment devised by Matteucci. A number of thin plates of mica are superposed like a pack of cards, metallic plates being applied to the outer facings: when one of these plates is electrified, the whole apparatus is charged like a Leyden phial; and upon separating the plates with insulating handles, each is found to be separately electrified, one side of it being positive and the other negative.

Let us now turn to another class of electric phenomena, which are commonly considered as affording valid evidence of the emanation of a fluid; namely, the electric spark, the electric brush, the voltaic arc (*i. e.* the luminous arch which plays between the terminal points of a powerful voltaic battery), and similar appearances. These are all considered by Mr. Grove as produced by the emission, not of a hypothetical fluid, but of actual ponderable matter, driven off by the violence of the molecular action from the surface of the body from which the discharge is proceeding; and he adduces very cogent arguments in support of this position. Thus the colour of the electric spark, or of the voltaic arc, is determined by the substance of the metal; that from zinc being blue; from silver, green; from iron, red and scintillating; which are the colours given by these metals respectively in their ordinary combustion: and where the action has been kept up long enough (as when the voltaic arc is sustained for some time), the metallic particles given off from the terminals can be collected, tested, or even weighed. Thus, if the voltaic discharge be passed between zinc terminals in an exhausted receiver, a fine black powder of zinc is deposited on the sides of the receiver; and this, on being collected, takes fire readily in the air on being touched with a match or lighted wire, instantly burning into white oxide of zinc. To an ordinary observer, the zinc would appear to be burned twice, first in the voltaic arc, and secondly in the air: in the first case, however, there is no combustion, but an ignition of finely-divided particles, which undergo no chemical change; in the second, there is true combustion. So, again, iron is volatilised by the voltaic arc in nitrogen, or in an exhausted receiver; and when a scarcely perceptible film has lined the receiver, if this film be dissolved by an acid, the characteristic precipitate of Prussian blue is given when ferrocyanide of potassium is added to the solution. The same holds good in the production of the now well-known "electric light," which is the result of the ignition of the charcoal

points, and of the separation of their ignited particles in a state of excessively minute subdivision. If the access of oxygen be permitted, combustion takes place, and the charcoal terminals rapidly burn away; but when the action is carried on in a vacuum, so as to prevent all loss of this kind, the charcoal points are more gradually reduced by the wasting consequent upon the dissipation of their particles through the space between and around the terminals. Even when the terminals are composed of platinum, and the intervening medium is a gas which cannot act chemically upon it, the metal is gradually carried off, and is deposited in a cloud or film on the surrounding glass.

It is not only the substance of the terminals which is thus affected; the intervening medium has a great influence on the nature of the electric manifestation, and is in its turn sensibly affected by the passage of the discharge. One of the most beautiful of all electric phenomena is the imitation of the Aurora Borealis, which may be produced by the passage of the discharge through highly attenuated air; the spark of an inch in length being changed into a luminous glow, or diffused scintillation, which will stretch across several feet; and the colour of the light being altered by substituting one gas for another. Now when composite gases, such as ammonia, nitrous oxide, and the like, are subjected to the electric discharge, they are usually decomposed; whilst mixed gases, which will enter into chemical combination, such as oxygen and hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen, hydrogen and chlorine, are made to unite by the same means. Thus we have many cases of chemical change in the act of transmission of the (so-called) electric current through gases; and even in the case of simple gases, there is strong reason to believe that new molecular arrangements are developed in them, persistent in some cases, but in others giving place to the ordinary condition so soon as the electric excitation ceases. One of the most remarkable instances of permanent alteration is that which is induced in oxygen by the passage of the electric discharge through it; the substance called *ozone* being thus produced, which, though at one time supposed to be a peculiar compound of oxygen and hydrogen, is now generally admitted to be nothing but oxygen rendered *allotropic*, that is, caused to assume a new guise, and endowed with very peculiar properties, among which its intense power of decomposing organic compounds is one of the most remarkable.

Further, although we are accustomed to think that (so-called) electric currents may pass along good conductors, such as metallic wires, without altering their molecular condition, yet careful experiment shows that sensible changes are really produced by them in the intimate structure of such bodies; the only requisite

for the manifestation of these changes being a sufficient potency of the currents if their duration be brief, or a sufficient duration if their intensity be weak. Thus, if successive discharges from a Leyden jar be passed through a platinum wire too thick to be fused by them, it will soon be found that the wire is shortened; and if the discharges be continued, the wire gradually gathers up in small irregular bends or convolutions. Again, if a continuous though feeble electric current be made to pass through a copper wire for several days, the wire will be found to have diminished in tenacity; and wires which have long served to conduct atmospheric electricity are observed to have become quite brittle. It is curious that in the case of iron the effect should be of a reverse nature, the tenacity being increased instead of diminished by continued electrification. During the passage of the electric current, moreover, metallic wires are found to sustain a temporary diminution of their elasticity. From experiments on bismuth (crystals of which metal can easily be obtained large enough for such experiments), there is reason to believe that the same law holds good for electricity as for heat; namely, that their conduction is better in the direction of the cleavage planes, than transversely to them.

Thus it is obvious that the molecular structure of a body influences—it may be said, determines—its power of conducting electricity; whilst there is very strong evidence that this structure is modified in every case during the passage of the electricity, such modification being temporary in some cases, permanent in others. Mr. Grove has recently published some very curious additional facts bearing closely on this point. It was some years since discovered in Germany, that if a coin or medal be placed on a smooth surface of glass or metal, and be electrified, impressions are left on that surface, which become visible when breathed on, and which on this account have been called “*oric figures*.” Various attempts have been made to fix these by exposure to the vapour of mercury or iodine; but, until lately, without success. Impressed, however, with the conviction that the effects are due to molecular changes in the electrified surfaces, which might be rendered sensible by appropriate means, Mr. Grove has essayed to find such means; and has completely succeeded. Thus, having placed a piece of a printed handbill between two plates of window-glass carefully cleaned and dried, the outside surfaces of which were coated with tinfoil, and having electrified the tinfoil-coatings for a few minutes, he found that, on separating the glass-plates, not only were the printed words, and even the fibres of the paper, “brought out” like frost-work on the surface of the glass by breathing on it, but the impression might be rendered durable by etching with hydrofluoric

acid. A like result was produced by cutting the letters forming a word out of a sheet of thin white letter-paper, which was then placed between two plates of glass whose external surfaces were electrised as before; for when the interior surfaces were separated, and one of them was exposed to hydrofluoric-acid vapour, the previously-invisible figures came out perfectly, and formed a permanent and accurate etching of the word cut out of the paper. The other plate, on which the same invisible image had been impressed, was immersed in a bath of nitrate of silver, in the same manner as for a photograph, held opposite a window for a few seconds, and then taken into a darkened room; and on pouring over it a solution of pyrogallic acid, the word came out with perfect distinctness, that part of the surface being darkened which had been insulated by the absence of the paper, whilst the remainder, over which the electricity had been diffused, was protected (as it were) by electrification from the action of light. The figures were permanently fixed in the usual way by hyposulphite of soda.

Now although these and similar facts, which prove that the passage of electricity gives rise to molecular changes in the medium through which it passes, do not directly negative the theory of a fluid, yet it is obvious that they are much more simply explained upon the idea that the transmission of electricity is the transmission of a force akin to that which manifests itself in sensible motion. For on the latter hypothesis, the direct influence of the molecular condition of bodies on their transmitting power is just what might be expected; whilst on the former, we are obliged to attribute part of the result to the unknown properties of an entity of whose separate existence we have no evidence. There seems adequate ground for the affirmation, that there is not a single electrical effect, in which, if a close investigation be instituted, and the materials be chosen in a state adapted for the exhibition of minute changes, evidences of molecular change will not be detected; and thus, excepting in those cases where infinitesimally small quantities of matter are acted on, or the action is so feeble as to baffle our means of detection, electrical effects are known to us only as changes of ordinary matter. Hence it seems quite as easy to imagine these changes to be produced by a force acting in definite directions, as by a fluid which has no independent or sensible existence, and which can only produce its characteristic effects when acting either upon ordinary matter, or upon some hypothetical ether, the existence of which is altogether incapable of proof. Electrical attractions and repulsions are as readily explicable without such a hypothetical fluid, as is the attraction of gravitation itself; and although Newton was inclined to believe that some ethereal medium of

communication must exist throughout the universe, to account for the universal attraction of all the masses of matter which it comprehends, yet modern philosophers, acting upon his own precept *non fingere hypotheses*, content themselves with adopting the fact of universal attraction, without attempting to solve the mystery of its operation between remote bodies. And it is gradually coming to be perceived that, if the same rule be followed in other departments of science, we are far more likely to get at the truth, than by a contented acquiescence in vague forms of words. Thus, as Mr. Grove justly remarks, "as the idea of the hypothetic electrical fluid is pursued, it gradually vanishes, and resolves itself into the idea of force;" whilst, on the other hand, the idea of molecular change, the more it is pursued, becomes more and more definite and tangible; numerous phenomena of great interest (of which a sample has been previously cited) having been already discovered by experiments carefully devised under the guidance of this idea, of which phenomena we should otherwise have probably long remained in ignorance.

Of all the forms of physical force, Electricity is that which is most directly related to all the rest; since there is no one of them which may not be immediately called forth by its agency, whilst most of them are capable, in their turn, of exciting it. Of the existence of this reciprocity or correlation between electricity and mechanical motion, we have already spoken; we shall now adduce a few facts which prove that it possesses the like relation to other forces.—It was discovered many years since by Seebeck, that if two pieces of different metals be soldered together at one end, so as to form a V, and heat be applied to the angle at which they join, an electric current is produced resembling that which is generated by chemical action in the voltaic battery; and practical advantage has been taken of this fact in the construction of the "thermo-multiplier," an instrument for measuring minute changes of temperature by means of their effect upon a combination of bismuth and antimony; the electric current thus generated being made to manifest itself, according to the principle to be presently explained, in deflecting a magnetic needle. The indication thus afforded of the direct relationship between heat and electricity is proved by the converse very familiar fact, that electricity gives place to heat whenever its passage through any medium is obstructed, either by the insufficient size of the conducting substance, or by its bad transmitting-power. Thus, if a fine platinum-wire be interposed between the terminals of a sufficiently powerful voltaic battery, this wire will be ignited to a red or even to a white heat; its capacity for the transmission of electricity being limited by its dimensions, and the amount of heat produced being in strict accordance with the amount of

electricity kept back. Now in a well-constructed voltaic battery, a measure of the quantity of electricity generated in a given time is afforded by the amount of zinc dissolved during the same period; the chemical action being diminished when the electric current is retarded, and being altogether suspended when the circuit is completely broken. Now if, when a platinum-wire too small to give passage to the current has thus become heated, the quantity of zinc dissolved in a given time be noted, and the wire be immersed in water, so that its heat is rapidly dissipated, a more rapid consumption of zinc will take place; whilst conversely, if the wire be placed in the flame of a spirit-lamp, so that the heat meets with greater resistance to its dissipation, the chemical action is correspondingly retarded. Thus in each case we have evidence, that a constant proportion exists between the heat-producing effects of electricity and the chemical action employed to generate it.—The production of light by electricity is so closely related to that of heat, as not to require separate notice, especially as it has been already incidentally alluded to; and although there is as yet no positive evidence that light can produce electricity, except through the medium of chemical action, yet there is every probability that such a direct correlation will be hereafter discovered. The whole subject is yet in the infancy of its development; and the discovery of so many of the most important of these relations already disclosed has been the result of happy accidents, that many more will doubtless be brought to light when they are carefully and systematically looked for.

It is said to have been by one of such happy accidents that the first step was made in the science of Electro-Magnetism. The disturbance produced in magnetic needles by the passage of electric currents in their neighbourhood, had clearly indicated the existence of some relation between these two powers; and almost every electrician had tried to make a magnet by the transmission of electric currents or discharges through bars of iron, but had tried in vain. In all these attempts, however, the electric transmission had been in the direction of the length of the bars: *Ørsted* happened to pass a charge across a bar, and the first electro-magnet was made. Working out this discovery with such sagacity as only a first-rate mind could bring to bear upon it, he found that the effect was greatly intensified, when, instead of passing the discharge across the bar, he made a continuous current to circulate round and round it in a direction transverse to its length; and in this mode electro-magnets of far greater intensity than the most powerful natural magnets, or than any artificial magnets producible through their instrumentality, can be made or unmade in an instant, by simply completing or in-

interrupting the connection between a wire coiled in a helix round a bar of soft iron and a galvanic battery of sufficient force. Many physicists were led, by too hasty deduction from this experiment, to the conclusion that electricity and magnetism are identical agencies; but such a conclusion is by no means borne out by the facts of the case. For all the manifestations of magnetism are so different from those of electricity, as clearly to require that the two should be placed in a distinct category; and the utmost that (Ersted's experiment proves, is the capability of electricity under certain conditions to evolve or produce magnetism. The presence of iron is not essential; for the polar direction, which is the most distinctive manifestation of magnetic force, is taken by a helix through which an electric current is passing, whenever this is so supported (as by being floated with its galvanic cell on water) as to be free to point north and south; the core of iron introduced within the helix having merely the effect of concentrating the magnetic power, and of retaining it if the iron be hard.

It seemed natural to suppose that, if electricity could thus produce magnetism, magnetism should be capable in its turn of producing electricity. Here Ersted was at fault; and it was our own Faraday who solved the problem, not by a happy accident, but by the force of philosophical reasoning. For, perceiving that magnetism differs from electricity in being not a motive but a directing power, and that, for a static to produce a dynamic condition, motion must be superadded, he put a magnet in rotation within a helix, and found that an electric current was then transmitted from one extremity of the wire to the other. And further investigation showed that this current is also momentarily generated, whenever the intensity of the magnetism is altered either by increase or diminution; any such change giving the magnetic power for the instant a dynamic character. A very simple mode of exhibiting this beautiful experiment, is to wind a coil of insulated wire round the soft iron "keeper" of a sufficiently powerful horseshoe-magnet, bringing the wires proceeding from the two ends of the coil into very close proximity, but not into absolute contact; for whenever the "keeper" is applied to the poles of its magnet, or is withdrawn from them, being thus made and unmade as a temporary magnet, a spark is seen to pass between the two extremities of the wire. In this discovery of Faraday's, we have the precise complement of Ersted's; taken together, the two fully establish the correlation between electricity and magnetism: and we see that they concur with each other to show that these forces act upon one another, not in straight lines, as all other known forces do, but in a transverse direction; that is, bodies through which an electric current

is passing tend to place magnets at right angles to themselves; while, conversely, magnets tend to place bodies conducting electricity at right angles to themselves.

It cannot be necessary for us to dwell on the correlation between electricity and chemical affinity; since this is at once evidenced by the production of electric currents by the purely chemical action of the voltaic battery, and conversely by the phenomena of chemical decomposition or union which the electric current may be made to induce. Some chemists and physicists have gone so far as to infer from these facts that electricity and chemical affinity are identical; but there are many difficulties in the way of such an hypothesis, which entirely disregards the marked difference in the characteristic manifestations of these two modes of force; and the notion of "correlation" far more accurately represents the state of the case, when, hypothesis being laid aside, it is rested on the sure basis of experiment.

We have dwelt the longer upon electricity, because it occupies a sort of central position amongst the physical forces; for whenever we fail in causing one of these to generate another by an immediate action, we can always procure the result through its intermediation. We must now briefly notice these other powers.

The close relationship of Magnetism to electricity, and its peculiarity as a directive force having no power of originating motion, but capable of modifying other motions, having been already pointed out, we need not dwell upon those of its phenomena with which every tyro is familiar, but shall limit ourselves to the mention of a few of those recent discoveries which have most extended our knowledge of its agency. Pre-eminent among these is the unexpected generalisation of Faraday, that all matter is subject to the influence of magnetism, ordinary substances differing from iron in this, that they are affected in a transverse direction; so that whilst a bar of iron, hung above the two poles of a horseshoe-magnet, places itself in the line parallel to that which joins them, a bar either of any other metal (save cobalt and nickel), or of glass, wood, bone, &c., will place itself at right angles to this, so as to hang in the plane passing midway between the poles; whence such bodies are said to be *diamagnetic*. This general statement, however, is to be understood only as true of bodies whose condition does not depart far from that of homogeneity; for it has been shown by Dr. Tyndall, that the action of the magnetic force is liable to be completely reversed by such a change in the molecular aggregation, whether of magnetic or of diamagnetic bodies, as may give them a greater compactness of structure in one direction than in another. For example, if a mass of iron filings be pressed together into a plate, in such a manner as to lie in much closer contiguity in the direction of its



thickness than in that of its surface, this plate, when freely suspended above the poles of the magnet, will take up such a position, that its diameter is not parallel, but transverse to the line which joins them, conducting itself, in fact, as if it were a diamagnetic body. On the other hand, if a similar plate of any diamagnetic substance, such as a lozenge or a biscuit compressed by the stamping of its surfaces, be suspended in the same situation, it will take up such a position, that the direction of its diameters is parallel to that of the line joining the poles of the magnet, as it would be if the plate were of ordinary iron. Thus in each case it would seem as if the directive force acted most energetically along those lines in the direction of which the particles of the substance lie in the closest contiguity; and thus we have a strong indication that the *modus operandi* of this force mainly depends upon the state of molecular aggregation of the bodies on which its agency is exerted.

Further, many recent experiments indicate that magnetic phenomena are accompanied with some molecular change in the substance which exhibits them. Thus it has been found by Wertheim that the elasticity of iron and steel is altered by magnetisation,—that of iron being temporarily, and that of steel permanently, diminished; whilst, on the other hand, the temporary twisting of a magnetised iron-bar diminishes the intensity of its magnetism, its original directive force returning with the restoration of the bar to its primitive state. Again, it has been observed that a bar of iron slightly curved by its own weight is straightened by being magnetised, and that a slight elongation is also produced by this operation. And the experiments of Plucker, Faraday, and others, have shown that a certain definite relation exists between magnetism and the polar force which produces crystallisation; many transparent bodies, when freely suspended, taking a position in regard to the magnetic poles which is dependent upon the direction of their optic axes; whilst crystals of bismuth and other opaque substances take a direction which is definitely related to that of their axis of symmetry. So, again, it has been shown by Professor Grove that when any metal susceptible of magnetism (namely, iron, nickel, or cobalt) is either magnetised or demagnetised, its temperature is raised; and the power of a plate of homogeneous iron to conduct heat equally in all directions has been found to be considerably modified in regard to any part of it that is subjected to the influence of a powerful electro-magnet.

These are examples of the extensive series of phenomena, recently brought to light by patient and accurate experimental research, which indicate the close relation of magnetism to those peculiarities of molecular structure that have been shown to affect

the properties of bodies in regard to heat, light, and electricity, and which seem to justify the conclusion that it is a mode of force nearly akin to these. Much, however, still remains to be done in this direction; indeed, it may be said that this class of inquiries has only just been started.

Although it has been usual to draw a decided line of demarcation between physics and chemistry, and to regard Chemical Affinity as a force altogether *sui generis*, yet the distinction fails when we come to analyse closely the elementary forms of both sets of phenomena. Every text-book of chemistry includes the consideration of both heat and electricity; since these forces participate largely, to say the least, in all chemical phenomena. It is probable that no chemical change whatever takes place without some alteration of temperature, and some disturbance of electric equilibrium; whilst, on the other hand, alteration of temperature and electric excitement are among the most frequent occasions of chemical change. When adverting to voltaic electricity, we have seen how intimately the transmission of electricity through a liquid undergoing decomposition is connected with the chemical change in its particles; whilst, on the other hand, the origin of the current is itself dependent on the new combinations which are taking place in the battery. And the careful inquiries of Faraday have shown that a precise relation of equivalence exists between these two actions; so that when a battery composed of zinc, platinum, and water, is made to decompose water, the amount of oxygen that unites with the zinc in each cell of the battery is exactly equal to the amount evolved at one of the electrodes; whilst the hydrogen evolved from each platinum-plate of the battery is equal to the hydrogen evolved from the other electrode. A like rule applies to all liquids capable of being decomposed by the voltaic force; the amount of the components separated by the passage of the current bearing always that relation to the chemical action whereby the current is originated, which is expressed by the chemical equivalents or atomic weights of the respective substances. With respect to such an operation, therefore, it may be almost said that the voltaic action is nothing else than chemical action transferred by a chain of media from one place to another.—The relations of chemical affinity to other modes of force have not yet been sufficiently traced out to enable them to be stated with certainty; but it is obviously correlated to light, either directly or through the medium of heat; and no less obviously to magnetism, either directly or through the medium of electricity. So, again, it is well known that chemical action becomes a source of motion, as in the explosion of gun-powder or gun-cotton; though it is not yet clear from what source the elastic force of the disengaged gases is derived.

Light is perhaps that mode of force whose reciprocal relations to the rest have been the least traced out; yet so much has been accomplished within a comparatively brief period, chiefly through the interest taken by the public in the photographic art, that sanguine expectations may be reasonably entertained of future discovery in this direction. It must be constantly borne in mind, that the conditions which serve for the determination of such relations are frequently very peculiar and recondite; and many tedious series of experiments may be carried on without success, before some fortunate concurrence of circumstances happens to supply the deficient link. Thus, among all the multitude of saline compounds with which the chemist is familiar, there are none on which light has any potent action save the salts of silver, which it has the effect of decomposing so as to precipitate the metallic silver; hence this action, though shared in a certain degree by many other salts, might not yet have been discovered, if the salts of silver had been as little known as those of the rarer metals. So the beautiful experiment by which Faraday showed the direct influence of magnetic force on light (producing the rotation of a polarised beam) would probably not have succeeded, if our philosopher had not chanced to have by him some peculiar glass made many years previously from borate of lead, which served as a more effectual medium for bringing the magnetic force to bear upon the luminous ray than any other substance yet tried. The existence of this relation having been once ascertained, it was traced with comparative facility through the intermediation of other substances, the effects of which would not have been sufficiently marked to attract observation in the first instance. Hence, if Faraday had not been engaged many years previously in experiments on the manufacture of glass for optical purposes, or had not chanced to preserve this specimen of his production, or had not happened to think of trying it in the apparatus which his sagacity had devised for testing the power of magnetism to act on polarised light (which combination of chances was almost infinitely against a favourable result), science might not yet have been enriched by the remarkable discovery to which we allude.

Glimpses have been obtained of the direct agency of light in producing both electricity and magnetism, as well as in modifying the molecular arrangement of the particles of bodies undergoing crystallisation; but these results cannot yet be asserted to afford a definite basis for the assertion that such a direct relation exists. There is, however, no difficulty whatever in causing light to call forth all the other physical forces indirectly, as in the following very ingenious experiment exhibited by Mr. Grove in his lectures at the London Institution as far back as 1843:—A pre-

pared daguerreotype plate is enclosed in a box filled with water and having a glass front with a shutter over it; between this glass and the prepared plate a gridiron of silver wire is interposed, which is connected with one extremity of a Breguet's helix (an instrument constructed to indicate minute changes of temperature by the unequal expansion and contraction of two metals); whilst the plate itself is connected with a galvanometer coil (that is, a coil passing over and under a magnetic needle), and the other extremities of the helix and galvanometer coil are connected by a wire so as to complete the circuit. As soon as a beam either of daylight or of the oxy-hydrogen *light* is allowed, by the raising of the shutter, to impinge upon the plate, a *chemical change* is produced on its surface; which is attended with an excitement of *heat* as indicated by Breguet's helix, and initiates an *electric current*, the circulation of which affects the *magnetic polarity* of the needle of the galvanometer, whilst in the deflection of the indices, both of the helix and of the galvanometer, *motion* is produced.

The mutual relation of light and heat is familiar to every one; being, in fact, so close as to render it doubtful whether they should not be regarded as modifications of one common force, rather than as two distinct agencies mutually dependent. The modes of action of radiant heat and light are so similar,—both being subject to the same laws of reflection, refraction, double refraction, and polarisation,—that their difference appears to be more in the manner in which they respectively affect our senses, than in our mental conceptions of them. Although, in the ordinary phenomena of combustion, light and heat are generated at the same time, yet they are by no means inseparable; and there are certain bodies which have a much greater capacity for evolving light when heated, than others possess. Thus all the substances ordinarily employed for illumination, contain both hydrogen and carbon; the combustion of the former is the chief source of their heating, that of the latter of their illuminating power; and hence those which, like camphine or olefiant gas, contain a large proportion of carbon, give out most light in proportion to the heat which they evolve; whilst those which, like alcohol or light carburetted hydrogen, contain a large proportion of hydrogen, generate an excess of heat in proportion to the light which they give out. The oxy-hydrogen flame possesses greater heating power than almost any other, whilst it is almost totally destitute of illuminating power; but when it is made to play upon a ball of lime, the light given off from this is more intense than any artificial light at present producible, except that of the voltaic arc.

Whether, in this and similar cases, the heat is converted into

light, or whether it is simply concentrated and increased in intensity so as to become visible, may be open to some doubt; and this doubt is strengthened by the recent experiments of Sir John Herschel and Professor Stokes, which show that the ordinary solar beam contains rays which produce no luminous impression until they fall on certain special substances. These rays lie in the solar spectrum beyond its violet extremity; so that if the whole visible spectrum thrown upon a piece of white paper were cut off by the interposition of an opaque body, their place would not be indicated by even the faintest illumination. But if for the part of the white paper beyond the violet rays, there be substituted a piece of glass tinged by the oxide of uranium, or a bottle filled with solution of sulphate of quinine or with the juice of horse-chestnuts, or a piece of paper soaked in either of these solutions, the glass, the bottle, or the paper, will be rendered distinctly visible by the light they will then reflect. The electric light contains so large a proportion of this class of rays, that designs drawn in various transparent and colourless fluids are brought out by its means, although quite invisible by ordinary light. It seems by no means impossible that these curious rays may hold an intermediate place between those of heat and those of ordinary light; and that the difference may lie rather in the intensity, than in the nature, of those molecular changes in which these two agents respectively consist.

The phenomena of light are usually explained, as our readers generally must be aware, upon one or other of two theories,—the *emission* or *corpuscular* theory of Newton, which supposes light to consist of luminiferous particles sent off from the luminous body; and the *undulatory* theory of Huyghens, which supposes light to be produced, like sound, by undulatory movements—not, however, of the atmosphere or any such sensible medium, but of a hypothetical ether. Each of these theories is attended with certain difficulties; and the latter, although generally accepted by modern physicists, does not suffice to explain by any means all the phenomena to which it should apply. The absorption of light by dark substances is a difficulty which neither theory has satisfactorily solved; but it is readily disposed of on the correlation doctrine, by the supposition (which there is much to support) that the rays of light in ceasing to produce luminous effects take the attributes of heat. Thus we may plausibly explain the well-known experiment of laying pieces of differently-coloured cloth on the surface of snow in the sunshine, by saying, that the white cloth lies unchanged in place because it reflects all the light that falls upon it; whilst the black cloth sinks deep in consequence of the conversion into heat of the light which it has absorbed, and the application of this heat to the liquefaction of

the snow beneath. And in like manner, the elevation of temperature which presents itself in substances that stop a part of the luminous rays on their course through them, whilst no such elevation is produced by the passage of the most intense light through perfectly-transparent media, is readily accounted for on the same principle. The simplicity of this explanation, like that of the phenomena of vaporisation, is one of the chief recommendations of the theory. If, instead of having to account for the disappearance of one agent, and the springing up of the other out of nothing, we suppose that we have the same force in action under two different aspects, we get rid of a great deal of cumbersome hypothesis, and are led to state the facts of the case in a form much more accordant with truth.

In by far the larger number of cases in which Light is evolved, its manifestation can be directly traced to chemical combination; whilst, conversely, light is often a most powerful agent in bringing about chemical change. In fact, it may be doubted whether light does not alter the structure or composition of all matter through which it passes, or on which it falls. Upon such an alteration depend, not only all the phenomena of photography, and numerous chemical changes of a most important character, but also the sustentation of all organic life, and our own sensibility to visual phenomena. For it is by the extraordinary influence of light upon the surface of the growing plant, that it is able to separate the inorganic elements of water, carbonic acid, and ammonia, and to unite them into those new and peculiar compounds,—starch, oil, albumen, and their derivatives,—which serve, not only for the extension of the vegetable fabric, but also for the nutrition of the animal body; so that without light, as Lavoisier truly said, nature were without life and without soul. So, again, there can be no doubt that it is by directly producing some change in the nervous tissue of the retina, of which change the result is transmitted to the sensorium, that luminous impressions are communicated to our consciousness; and this change is essential to the continued nutrition of the tissue; for it is well known to the physiologist, that if an opacity on the front of the eye completely prevent the access of light to the interior, the retina and the optic nerve gradually waste away, just as muscles do when long disused. What the precise nature of this change may be, is yet beyond our ken; but of the immediate and direct relation of light to the peculiar properties of animal bodies, a very remarkable proof has been recently given by the researches of one of the best experimental physiologists of our time, M. Brown-Séguard; for he has found that the contraction of the fibres of the iris, which diminishes the diameter of the pupil, is capable of being called forth, not only by the stimulus

of light upon the retina, which affects the iris through the nervous circle of reflex action, but also by the impact of light upon the iris itself, which directly excites the contraction of its muscular fibres, in the same way as electrical or mechanical stimulation excites muscular contraction elsewhere.

By these most important links of connection, we are conducted to another division of the inquiry,—that which relates to the powers of Life. There have not been wanting, at any period in the history of physiology, men who have attempted to identify all the forces acting in the living body with those operating in the inorganic universe. Because muscular force, when brought to bear on the bones, puts them in motion according to the laws of mechanics,—and because the propulsive power of the heart drives the blood through the vessels on strictly hydraulic rules,—it has been imagined that the movements of living bodies may be fully explained on physical principles; no account being taken of the most important consideration of all, namely, the *source* of that power which the living muscle possesses, but which the dead muscle is utterly incapable of exerting. So, again, because the digestive process whereby food is reduced to a fit state for absorption, and the formation of various products of the decomposition that is continually taking place in the living body, may be imitated in the laboratory, it has been supposed that the appropriation of the nutriment to the production of living tissue, and the various metamorphoses which this undergoes, are to be regarded as chemical phenomena; here, again, those most essential peculiarities of the living body, which involve the temporary subjection of ordinary chemical affinities to some other agency, being entirely passed by. A scarcely less unphilosophical method, however, has been pursued by another class of reasoners, who have cut the Gordian knot by attributing all the actions of living bodies which physics and chemistry cannot account for, to a hypothetical “vital principle;” an agency which they suppose to exert an autocratic rule in each organism, and whose laws they think it vain to seek.

By various intelligent physiologists of modern times, however, the dynamical ideas introduced from physics and chemistry have been carried into the domain of life; and it has been felt that the only mode of placing physiology on a truly scientific basis is, to regard those phenomena which, being altogether peculiar to living bodies, are designated “vital,” as the manifestations of a special force or power, and to seek to determine the laws of its operation by the study of its actions. Of all these actions, there is none so universal, and therefore so characteristic, as that by which the organism is built up, or rather builds itself up, from the germ, by the appropriation of materials derived from external

sources, and subsequently maintains itself in its characteristic form during its term of life; hence the hypothetical power which is the supposed source of it has been designated as the *visus formativus*, the *bildungstrieb*, or the *organising force*. This power is usually considered as inherent in the organic structure, and as quite independent of heat or other agencies external to this, although they are admitted to exert an exciting or modifying influence on its operation; and it is supposed to be imparted to each individual, like the substance of the germ from which it sprang, by the parental organisms which preceded it. In this point of view, therefore, the germ being potentially the entire organism, all the organising force required to build up an oak or a palm, an elephant or a whale, must be concentrated in a minute particle only discernible by microscopic aid. But the hypothesis may be disproved by even a more complete *reductio ad absurdum* than this; for if we suppose the whole organising force to be inherent in the organism itself, and to have been at first derived from its parents, the aggregate of the forces possessed by the several individuals, how numerous soever, of any one species, must have been concentrated in their first progenitors,—a doctrine scarcely less monstrous than that of the *emboitement* of the germs themselves, which were once supposed to lie packed one within the other, like nests of pill-boxes.

Now, as the progress of physiological inquiry has been recently bringing more and more clearly into view the dependence of all Vital activity upon certain antecedent conditions, it has especially established such a definite relation between the degree of this activity and the amount of Heat supplied to the organism either from external or internal sources, as to make it clear that this agent is much more than a mere stimulus or provocative to the exercise of the vital force, and really furnishes the power that does the work. It has been, in fact, from the narrow limitation of the area over which physiological research has been commonly prosecuted, that this great truth has not sooner become apparent. Whilst the vital phenomena of warm-blooded animals, which possess within themselves the means of maintaining a constant temperature, were made the sole, or at any rate the chief objects of study, it was not likely that the inquirer would recognise the influence of external heat in accelerating, or of cold in retarding, their functional activity. It is only when the survey is extended to cold-blooded animals and to plants, that the immediate and direct relation between heat and vital energy,—as manifested in the rate of growth and development, or of other changes peculiar to the living body,—is unmistakably evinced.

All the facts and generalisations of Botanical Geography point



to the uninterrupted supply of a large measure of light and heat as the source of the rich luxuriance and perennial activity of tropical vegetation; whilst the periodical declension of vegetative activity which we observe in the trees and plants of the temperate zone, is no less obviously due to the seasonal diminution in the supply of these agents. So, again, the entire cessation of all manifestations of vegetative life during the protracted intensity of an arctic winter, is in striking contrast with the almost incredible rapidity of development which is observable under the unintermitted beams of the summer sun. Now there are certain annual plants, such as the corn-grains, which will flourish under a considerable variety of climatic conditions, and whose term of life is definitely marked out; and of such it has been ascertained by Boussingault, that the same aggregate amount of light and heat is required by each kind for the sustentation of its whole term of activity from germination to the maturation of its seed, under whatever latitude it be grown; that term being so uniformly abbreviated by an exaltation, and protracted by a depression, in the intensity of these forces, as to show that its rate of life must stand in a direct ratio to them.

We have already seen that the influence of Light is exerted in providing the material for vegetable growth by a quasi-chemical action; and it is capable of proof by direct experiment, that, *cæteris paribus*, the quantity of carbonic acid decomposed by a plant in a given time is proportional to the amount of light that has fallen upon it. There is no reason to suppose that light acts upon more than the surface, or that it has any direct concern with the internal operations of growth and development. On the contrary, we find that at one most important epoch, that of germination, these processes are most actively carried on in the dark; it being only when all the store of nutriment laid up in the seed has been exhausted, and when the young plant is beginning to be dependent upon that which it obtains for itself, that the influence of light becomes requisite. On the other hand, the rate of germination is so closely dependent, as every maltster knows, upon the degree of heat to which the seed is exposed, that it is capable of being exactly regulated by an increase or a diminution of the temperature; and thus we are led to regard heat as the force by which the vegetable germ is enabled to appropriate the nutriment prepared for it, and to organise this into living tissue. Such a view, however, is by no means equivalent to the assertion, that heat is itself the "vital principle" or the organising force. We do not say that heat is electricity, because the heating a certain combination of metals produces an electric current through them; nor do we say that heat is mechanical force, because by boiling water we generate an elastic vapour.

In each of these instances, the character of the force is changed ; and so it is here. The living organism is the medium of transmutation, like the bismuth and antimony in the first case, or like the water in the second ; and its special peculiarity is, that it converts the heat, not only into vital force generally, but into that peculiar form of it which exerts itself in building up and maintaining a certain structural type. Thus each species puts to a use of its own the heat that is supplied to it ; just as, if we may use so rough a simile, each of the machines in a large manufactory may turn out a particular kind of work, although the same motor force is supplied to all : and each generation transmits to its successor, not the force, but the capacity for making a particular use of the force ; just as a machine would do, that could apply its motor power to the construction of another machine similar to itself.

The study of the life-history of cold-blooded animals,—those, namely, whose temperature closely follows that of the medium they inhabit,—leads to precisely the same conclusions ; as is especially apparent in those cases in which the rate of life can be most accurately estimated. The earliest developmental changes in the fertilised egg of the frog, for example, consist in the cleavage, or segmentation, of the yolk-mass, first into two parts, then into four, then into eight, and so on ; and it was found by Mr. Newport, that the periods at which the successive cleavages took place were so precisely determined by the temperature to which the eggs were exposed, that he could predicate the former from the latter with great precision. So it has long been known that the production of larvæ from the eggs of insects could be accelerated or retarded, like the germination of plants, by increase or diminution of temperature ; and that the same holds good also regarding the production of the perfect insect from the chrysalis in the last metamorphosis. In the adult animal, the rate of life may be in some degree estimated by the amount of carbonic acid thrown off in respiration ; and it has been shown by the experiments of Dr. W. F. Edwards, that this increases in a direct ratio to the temperature to which the body is exposed ; whilst the duration of life when respiration is prevented, is much greater at low temperatures than at high, showing that the animals then live much more slowly.

The case is different, however, with warm-blooded animals ; for they are rendered in a great degree independent of external variations, by the power which they possess of generating such an amount of heat within themselves, as shall keep the temperature of their bodies up to a certain fixed standard. Hence it is that *their* rate of life varies very little, and that their developmental functions are performed with a remarkable conformity to

fixed periods of time. Thus in the incubated egg of the bird, which is not left to casual supplies of warmth, but is constantly subjected to the high temperature of the maternal body, the chick is matured after a definite term of days; and if the requisite heat were not thus constantly supplied, not merely would the developmental process be suspended, but the reduction of temperature would annihilate the organising power. For it is the peculiarity of warm-blooded animals, that whilst this power is more energetic in its action than that of the lower tribes, it requires for its maintenance a higher measure of heat; so that a reduction of the temperature of the body to such a degree as would favour the energetic activity of the fish or reptile, would be fatal to the bird or mammal.

Although there is still some obscurity respecting certain phenomena of "animal heat," yet there is no question amongst either chemists or physiologists in regard to the general fact, that the main source of this heat is the oxygenation (by a kind of combustive process) of the hydrocarbons contained in the food. Now we have seen that all these hydrocarbons, such as starch, sugar, oil, &c., are either directly or indirectly derived from the vegetable kingdom; and not only a certain amount of oxygen, hydrogen, and carbon have been consumed in their production, but also a certain amount of solar light and heat, which they may thus be said to embody. The combustive process is not so carried on in the living body as to give forth light, save in a few exceptional cases; but it reproduces in the form of heat all that was embodied in the respiratory food; and thus the warm-blooded animal may be said to be continually restoring to the universe that force which the growing plant had appropriated to itself. And carrying the same principle a little further, we may say, that in utilising the stores of coal which have been prepared by the luxuriant vegetation of past ages, man is not only restoring to the atmosphere the carbonic acid and water of the carboniferous epoch, but is actually reproducing and applying to his own uses the light and heat which its vegetation drew from the solar beams, as if for the very purpose of fixing them until he should find the means of turning them to account. Looking at this matter from the stand-point afforded by the "correlation" doctrine, we are led to question whether the project of the Laputan sage to extract sunbeams from cucumbers was so very chimerical, after all; while we cannot but feel an increased admiration of the intuitive sagacity of that remarkable man George Stephenson, who was often laughed at for propounding in a somewhat crude form the very idea which we have just been endeavouring to present under a more philosophical aspect.

There are other modes, however, in which the living anima

restores to the universe the forces which the plant took from it. Its most distinguishing attribute is motion; and this motion being another expression of force, the question arises, What is the source of that force? Here again we fall back on the plant, both for the force, and for the material of the structure which exerts it. All the higher forms of animal motion are the result of Muscular contraction; and physiologists are now generally agreed in the truth of the statement first formally enunciated by Liebig, that every act of muscular contraction involves the death and oxidation of an amount of muscular substance proportional to the force exerted. Hence we are justified in regarding the motion produced by this contraction as an expression of the vital force which is superseded by chemical action; and as holding the same relation to that chemical action, which the voltaic current bears to the oxidation of the zinc in the battery. Going further back, we find that the peculiar nitrogenous material of which muscle is composed, though organised by the animal under the agency already explained, is really generated by the plant; and that its production in large amount may be regarded as the highest effort of plant-life, taking place as it does only under the most favourable concurrence of conditions, among which a copious supply of light and heat are especially required. And thus we may say that the nitrogenous constituents of plants embody a high degree of force, which is destined ultimately to manifest itself in the sensible motions of animals. And it is a curious confirmation of this view, that if these substances pass into decomposition without being organised into muscle, they set free a large amount of chemical force; all those "ferments" which have so remarkable a power of exciting chemical changes in other organic compounds, being members of this group.

The highest manifestation of animal life, however, is unquestionably that Nerve-force, by the instrumentality of which our consciousness receives its impressions of phenomena external to it, and our will exerts its power in producing motion through the instrumentality of the muscular apparatus. Regarding the nature of this force there is still some obscurity, but its very close relation to electricity cannot be doubted: though many most eminent physicists hold that they are identical, we regard the "correlation" doctrine as equally accounting for all those facts which support such a view, whilst it also accords with others which seem opposed to it; and we therefore prefer to consider nervous force as belonging to a distinct category. As its source lies, like that of muscular power, in the chemical changes involved in the death and decomposition of the peculiar tissue which manifests it, we trace it back ultimately to the plant which generated the material of the tissue, and thence to the light and

heat which that plant received from the sun. Although the most obvious exertion of this force in the living body is that by which it calls forth muscular contraction, yet it can also influence in a very marked manner the processes of nutrition and secretion; so that its correlation with the general organising force is exhibited (as in the case of electricity and chemical action) on both sides, the nervous substance giving up its characteristic organisation whilst developing nerve-force, and that nerve-force being transmitted to a distant part, to be there applied in producing or modifying organisation. It is now well known that in the common experiment of exciting muscular contraction by galvanising a motor nerve, the galvanism does not act directly through the nerve upon the muscle, but excites the nerve-force in that part of the trunk which intervenes between the point irritated and the muscle to which the nerve is distributed; and in like manner, when sensation is called forth by the application of the electric stimulus to the sensory nerve, the effect is produced, not by the transmission of the electric current to the sensorium, but by the excitement of the nerve-force of the part of the trunk which proceeds towards it from the point irritated. And as the converse action to this excitement of nerve-force by electricity, we have the excitement of electricity by nerve-force in the electric fishes and a few other animals. Certain phenomena of animal heat seem to indicate that nerve-force may directly produce elevation of temperature; and there are forms of animal luminosity which do not appear to depend upon an ordinary combustive process, but which rather resemble electric scintillations, and seem immediately dependent on an exertion of nerve-force. Further, the peculiar influence of states of the nervous system upon the composition of various secretions, can only be explained by supposing that nerve-force has a direct power of modifying chemical action. So that of this, the highest form of vital force, all the material manifestations are of a kind that bring us back again into the region of physics and chemistry.

But there is another aspect under which we have to view nerve-force,—that of its relation to mental phenomena. That the excitement of this force in a certain part of our nervous apparatus is capable of producing a change in our state of consciousness, is the only explanation that can be offered of our recipience of Sensations from impressions made upon our organs of sense. So, again, that the state of mental activity which we term the Will can so excite the nerve-force of the central organs as to occasion its transmission to the muscular apparatus, is the only explanation that can be offered of our power of voluntary motion. These two simple facts seem quite adequate to establish a “correlation” between nerve-force and mental agency, which is not less com-

plete than that which has been shown to exist between nerve-force and electricity; and we are led to the same conclusion by a careful appreciation of the fact, which all physiological knowledge of the conditions of mental activity tends to establish, that this activity, like the exertion of muscular force, can only be sustained, as man is at present constituted, at the expense of the death and disintegration of the nervous substance. This idea of "correlation" once started, is found to give a scientific expression to a vast mass of facts demonstrative of the intimate connection between body and mind, which, though accepted as conformable to the universal experience of mankind, have not yet found their place in systematic treatises; since they occupy that "debatable ground" between metaphysics and physiology, which the votaries of each of these sciences, far from wishing to claim it for themselves, are desirous to cede to the dwellers on the other side of the border. Take, for example, the production of temporary insanity by intoxicating agents, on the one hand; the influence of the emotions, not merely on the quantity, but also on the quality, of the secretions, on the other. Here are unmistakable phenomena, that have just as great a claim to be examined and accounted for as those of ordinary mental or corporeal activity; and which have yet been passed by, simply because no one has yet been able to suggest any other than a "material" explanation of them.

We shall have greatly failed in our purpose, however, if we have not by this time led our readers to perceive how complete is the distinction between *matter* and *force*, and how close is the relation between *force* and *mind*. Matter is in no case more than the embodiment or instrument of force; all its (so-called) active states being merely the manifestations of an energy, which, under different forms, is unceasingly operative. Nor can it be fairly said, that in substituting the doctrine of force for that of the "imponderables," we are only setting up one hypothetical entity in place of another. Force is truly more of a reality to us than matter itself; for we cannot become cognisant even of the most fundamental property of matter—its occupation of space—without the consciousness of resistance. We cannot, it is true, isolate force from matter; but we have two modes of judging of it—one objective, the other subjective; one based on observation of external phenomena, the other on the direct revelation of our own consciousness. And we hold it to be by the combination of both sets of considerations, that our truest and most definite ideas of dynamical agency are to be attained. We are conscious of the exertion of a power, when we either produce or resist motion; whenever, therefore, we see bodies in motion, we infer that only by a like exertion of power could that motion have originated;

so when the retardation of motion gives rise to heat, or heat (in ceasing to manifest itself as such) gives rise to expansive force, we perceive that it is only the mode of manifestation that is changed, the fundamental power remaining the same. And as we are thus led by the "correlation" doctrine to consider the various agencies of nature as the expression of a conscious Will, we find the highest science completely according with the highest religion, in directing us to recognise the omnipresent and constantly sustaining energy of a personal Deity in every phenomenon of the universe around us,—the pantheistic and the anthropomorphic conceptions of His character being thus brought into harmony, when we view "nature" as the embodiment of the Divine Volition, the "forces of nature" as so many diversified modes of its manifestation, and the "laws of nature" as nothing but man's expressions of the uniformities which his limited observation can discern in its phenomena.

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ART. VI.—THE MUTUAL RELATION OF HISTORY AND RELIGION.

*Gott in der Geschichte, oder der Fortschritt des Glaubens an eine sittliche Weltordnung.* (God in History, or the Growth of the Faith in a Moral Order of the World.) By C. C. J. Bunsen. First Part. First and Second Book. Leipsic: Brockhaus, 1857.

*Comparative Mythology.* By Max Müller, M.A., Taylorian Professor, Oxford. (Oxford Essays, contributed by Members of the University, 1856.)

No one who mixes in general society and talks freely with all men, can be ignorant of the fact, that disquietude and uncertainty largely and powerfully affect the religious mind of the present day. But our age, though weak in faith, is not deficient—at least in those classes where its moral force resides—in deep and fervid earnestness. That on many points it is sceptical, is unhappily true; but we can hardly pronounce it an irreligious age. The destructive revolutions of the last seventy years have not swept over Europe without leaving a profound impression on the minds of serious and thoughtful men. Providence is teaching its highest lessons through the sorrowful experiences of History. Whatever may be men's doubts and difficulties with respect to the traditional faiths, they have learned that Religion is a reality which must not be

lightly dealt with; that mere science, mere intellectual culture, and all the resources of material wealth, however indispensable as the conditions of social progress, do not satisfy the deepest wants, and cannot insure the permanent tranquillity and blessedness, of the human spirit. France, emerging from a century of moral dissolution and unbelieving levity, is confessedly addressing its best intellect at this time to religious questions. If Germany, the cradle of religious freedom and the centre of theological light, present for the moment a less favourable aspect, it is because the political and spiritual despotism under which she is languishing, perverts and vitiates the natural and genuine results of deep learning and fearless inquiry; because the wild and eccentric—sometimes, it must be admitted, the pernicious and destructive—views that have been thrown off by an overworked intelligence, limited to a single sphere of thought, and forced into morbid activity by excessive competition in the field of pure speculation—have had no opportunity of testing their practical worth and validity under the free ventilation of an honest public opinion, or by coming into contact with the confessions and experiences of ordinary humanity in the daily business of life. Taking Europe as a whole, however, and our own country in particular, we cannot deny, that society has greatly improved in moral depth and earnestness of purpose within the last century. D'Holbach and Diderot find no counterpart in Comte, notwithstanding the atheism of his *Philosophie Positive*; and Thomas Carlyle, with all his scorn of existing faiths and worships, is at every point of his character the complete antithesis of Voltaire. All this is perfectly compatible with the fact, that many of the researches and studies which particularly distinguish our age, are not favourable in their immediate influence to a settled and definite belief. Geology and physiology are gradually uprooting many long-established convictions. That brilliant *résumé* of the actual results of modern science, Dr. Whewell's *Plurality of Worlds*, though put forth with the ostensible design of upholding the popular faith, left no stronger impression on the mind of the reader than the vastness of our ignorance. Scripture itself, on whose assumed infallibility the faith of earlier generations of Protestants securely reposed, and which shone in their eyes as a pure unbroken thread of heavenly light through the dark thick mass of human ignorance and doubt, has not escaped the application of those new canons of historical criticism—inevitably modifying the conception of its whole character and the principle of its treatment—which the learning and genius of a series of distinguished men, from Herder and Heyne to Niebuhr and Otfried Müller,



have successively elaborated, and placed beyond the reach of reasonable cavil and objection, and deposited among the permanent instruments of future research. Ethnology, Comparative Grammar, and, closely allied to them both, the various theories of Mythology, that earliest phase and necessary transition-process of human reflection on the invisible realities of this marvellous Cosmos,—are continually throwing fresh light on the elementary workings of human nature, individually and socially, and developing principles of uniform application which must lead to a new and juster interpretation of the history of man. The old critical field of vision has been unavoidably enlarged; and it is not in the power of man to contract it again. The Bible can no longer be regarded as one book. It is emphatically a literature, and only as such can be rightly understood and thoroughly enjoyed; a record in myth and legend and song, in chronicle and law, in prophetic utterance and moral teaching, of the highest thought and action of a remarkable people, from the infancy of their national existence, in the dim twilight of antiquity, till its final consummation in the appearance of that wonderful life whose spirit for nearly two thousand years has been silently transforming the moral condition of the civilised world; a literature which, in spite of its diversified and multifarious contents, is still essentially one in the self-consistency of the profound religious consciousness which pervades every part of it. Regarded from this point of view, every book of which it consists must be treated as a whole by itself, in reference to its age and its author, the sources from which its materials are derived, and the influences of contemporaneous thought under which it grew up into its actual form. Such inquiries, inseparable from the modern criticism, cannot but materially influence the interpretation of a book, and the relation of its results to their apprehension and acceptance by the mind of a later day. The effects of this new direction of thought in all investigations respecting the past, are perceptible in very different regions of society. Oxford exhibits them, not only in the admirable volume of *Essays* published last year by members of the University, but still more prominently, and with all the recommendation of high official position, in Mr. Jowett's learned and philosophical work on the *Epistles of St. Paul*. That the same influence has reached the more popular quarter of the Independents, is evident from the proceedings recently instituted against Dr. Davidson.

All, however, is not pure gain in this freer movement of theological thought. The need of a Scripture is not superseded by the prevalence of uncertainty as to the nature and extent of its authority: for authority is, and must be, a large element

in the government of this world, especially in matters relating to the invisible and spiritual. There are times when all men like to feel that there is something higher and stronger than themselves on which they can lean. Faith lies beyond the reach of mere intellect. In many respects, present appearances cause pain and uneasiness to the religious mind. It cannot, we fear, be questioned, that the scientific spirit of the age is largely imbued with pantheistic tendencies. Numbers of thoughtful men are accustomed to look on this world as a simple fact which terminates in itself, of whose origin they know nothing, of whose issue they know nothing. Behind and beyond the narrow span of mortal life all is to them a blank. Churches and sects, whose proper function it is to uphold an opposite frame of mind, notwithstanding the semblance of an outward unity, are notoriously divided and weakened in their inner life; and Scripture, which was once believed to underlie them all as an immutable basis, appears itself, on a superficial glance at the present state of theological learning, to participate in the general dissolution. Let us look fearlessly at this anxious question of our time, and see if we can approximate to its solution.

There are some trusts and convictions, the certainty of which is not demonstrable by the ordinary processes of reasoning, though they involve the deepest verities of our being, and are essential to human peace and guidance;—such are those of a living God, an absolute moral law, involving the consciousness of the absolute evil of sin, a progressive world-plan, an eternal life, in which death intervenes only as the crisis of transition from a lower to a higher stage of existence. These are the fundamental truths of religion, embraced within the province of faith; ever dimly latent in the human soul; capable of being overborne almost to apparent annihilation by an undue predominance of the sensuous and ratiocinative faculties; but ever reappearing in new forms, and with undiminished freshness, as a witness from age to age, and from land to land, of the indestructible religiousness of mankind. In the majority of men, immersed in sense and engaged with material objects, these latent perceptions of spiritual truth require to be awakened, invigorated, and called out into distinct expression by some outward utterance, which, though it comes with the authority of a higher mind and a holier life, still finds its witness and authentication in the spontaneous response of the moral nature to which it appeals. To excite and cherish such trusts and convictions is the special office of what we call a Scripture. In Scriptures, or sacred books, the prophetic minds of a people deposit the strongest and deepest of their religious

intuitions,—those eternal truths which come to them in immediate revelations of the Divine Spirit ; and on Scriptures, differing immensely from each other, it is true, in the worth and authority of their contents, and in the untroubled clearness of their communications, the faith of the most religious nations of the world,—the Indians, the Persians, the Arabs, and the Hebrews,—has ever rested. On the other hand, nations in whom the spiritual element was weak, and its place supplied by imagination or philosophic reflection or reverence for ancient tradition,—the Greeks and the Romans,—have had nothing corresponding to the Scriptures of the East, but satisfied such religious wants as they might experience from the fables of their poets, or from the hymns and legends associated with their local sanctuaries. From the date of the Reformation, Scripture took the place of the Church among Protestants as an infallible authority in all questions of religious faith and practice ; and it is the weakening of the implicit trust once attached to Scripture, in consequence of the freer modes of criticism and interpretation now employed, and the corresponding uncertainty in many minds about the relation of its teachings to the dictates of the individual reason and conscience, which causes at the present day so much of the moral feebleness and indecision of the Christian world, and renders the ordinary sectarian controversy so singularly disappointing and unfruitful.

Has Protestantism, then, no alternative between the retention of the whole of Scripture as plenary inspired, in the old orthodox sense, and the resource of a cold, isolated, self-relying, rationalistic Deism ? We say Protestantism, because Catholicism subjects the freedom of the individual conscience to the authority of the Church, and therefore does not come within the scope of our present inquiry ; though the mental perplexities occasioned by the actual condition of Protestantism have induced some highly-gifted and accomplished minds to accept its demands and put on its yoke. The question is, what remains for those who cannot with the Romanists renounce the future for the past ; who cannot go back, but must go forward ; who, though they are too honest and intelligent to repudiate the undeniable results of modern learning, still cannot afford to lose the comfort and guidance of a Scripture, if they can only understand its true character, and see where to rest its proper authority. This turns our attention to History ; for a Scripture from its very nature, and especially the Scripture with which Christian nations are concerned, is a record and expression of the past. We may affirm in general, that the scientific intellect of man is mainly exercised on the coexisting phenomena of space ; while his moral na-

ture is formed and guided by the successive phenomena of time, inasmuch as these indicate to him the essential unity of his race, and suggest the law of its progress and development. In the operation of this law there is continual action and re-action. If the mind and character of the individual are fashioned to a large extent by the collective influence of the community to which he belongs,—if the direction of the present is determined by the impulse of the past,—great and commanding personalities, on the other hand, powerfully react on the condition of their contemporaries, and an influence is constantly issuing from present thought and action which corrects and modifies the tradition of a long antiquity. In this interchange and fluctuation of influences, where do we find the criterion of stability and permanence? what is the final test of moral and spiritual truth? In questions of the deepest moment to our inward peace, we feel perpetually, that as individuals we are not equal to the solution of the difficulties which oppress our minds. How, then, are we to recognise what we may accept as a reliable guidance from others? This is the question of questions, involving the ultimate authority, not only of a Scripture or written revelation, but of every medium of faith, whencesoever furnished, in invisible realities unsusceptible of rigid scientific proof. The old mode was by appeal to miracle, as conferring directly a divine authority on every doctrine and institution associated with it; and on this ground attempts have been continually made by divines to give to the evidences of religion a strictly demonstrative character. We are far from denying either the possibility, or the fact, or the advantage of such outward signs, as an excitement and attraction to the more earnest consideration of religious truths, as a visible seal and impress of the Divine hand on what commends itself at the same time by its self-evidencing light to the acceptance of the soul within. But as no accumulation of these signs could compel us to receive as divine what our inward nature rejected as immoral and absurd; as cases might arise, such as are alluded to in Scripture itself, where it would be difficult to distinguish a true from a false miracle,—it is clear, that we do not through this process get at the real and ultimate criterion of spiritual truth. Without attempting on the present occasion a metaphysical investigation of that highest region of the soul which embraces necessary and universal truths, we may say, that practically this criterion will be found in the essential unity and self-consistency of our moral and spiritual nature, opening more and more with the progressive education of the race to a consciousness of the fundamental laws on which it rests, and which we learn—partly through mutual intercourse and sympathy,

partly through the awakening influence of superior minds on those that are less developed and advanced. What is the testimony of History? We observe extensive communities, whole nations of men, fall under the discipline of a certain tradition of moral and spiritual influences. Outwardly this discipline may be encumbered and burdened with all sorts of superstitions and absurdities; yet underneath them there must still exist some dim religious sense of dependence, obligation, and final destiny, which is in harmony with the primitive intuitions of the soul, and with the experiences of the daily life, or they could not carry with them, generation after generation, the submission, the reverence, and the trust which they continue to receive. It is the element of truth present in this absurdity which binds it on the soul. At length some prophetic spirit arises among them endowed with deeper insight, who discerns more clearly the essential amidst the unessential; and who disentangles it, if not entirely, yet to some extent, from the outer integument of unmeaning forms which confine and deaden its action. At the touch of his brighter intuition, their dim consciousness kindles into intelligence. At the voice of his stronger conviction, their inner nature awakens, and acquires a new perception of truth. He speaks the interpreting word, and the dark mysteries which enveloped them become significant; they begin to understand where they are, and why they exist; they begin obscurely to discern their personal relations to that invisible life which they see and feel is working in every thing around them. He does not reason with them. He gives utterance to the belief which fills his own soul, and they embrace it with spontaneous sympathy. Consciousness, observation, experience, verify it, till it grows into harmony with their whole life, and remains with them as a permanent element of their being. From what can this sympathy, which is the ground of the deepest faith, arise, but the contact of two natures essentially identical, which differ only in their degree of development, and the greater or less openness of their perceptions to those eternal truths which emanate directly from the primal source of light? We have all of us experienced effects of a similar kind in the utterances of some great poet or original thinker. We are conscious we could not ourselves have said or thought the same thing; but once uttered, we appropriate it as our own. It is what we ought to have thought, and what we shall ever henceforth think. It belongs to us through its affinity with our own inmost nature, and becomes a part of our future mental property. No doubt, when an individual has acquired over us the influence of a superior mind and a nobler character, there will be a disposition

to trust him and believe in him, even where we cannot at present follow him with our personal convictions ; for we feel that he is in advance of us,—nearer the fountain of all truth and goodness than ourselves ; and this command over human trust and sympathy forms no small part of the legitimate authority and elevating influence of a true prophet. But even in this case, what remains with us as a permanent element of moral and religious power, is what is felt to be in harmony with our primary intuition and our collective experience ; or if not yet directly attested by our personal consciousness, lies before us at least in the direction towards which our highest aspirations are continually tending. Thus there is constant action and reaction between the individual and the community. Great men rise up from time to time far above the level of their contemporaries, and infuse into society new life, new views, and a clearer intelligence. The *sensus communis* of society tests and discriminates the true and the false, the right and wrong, of the influence which is from time to time exerted on it by powerful and original minds ; rejects finally whatever is the growth of an eccentric individuality, and permanently absorbs into its own life, only those elements which are in harmony with its inherent laws and develop its essential unity. Thus the growth of belief, opinion, sentiment, on all those matters which lie beyond the reach of sense, goes on from age to age, varying ever in outward form and expression ; modified by the influences of contemporaneous knowledge and thought ; but resting ultimately on certain deep trusts and enduring convictions, which the Creator Himself wrought into the groundwork of our moral being, and which naturally and freely spring out of it whenever the needful conditions of their manifestation are presented. The poets of all ages are justly cited as authorities by the ethical and religious philosopher, because they most truly reflect the deepest secrets of the human soul, and are consequently among the best exponents of that profound spiritual consciousness which pervades the entire history of our race, and by its essential unity and self-consistency affords the strongest assurance of the certainty of the truths which it includes.

In the remainder of this inquiry we must confine our remarks to such intuitions as are properly religious, omitting those which are simply moral and intellectual ; and we must attempt to show how the pre-eminently clear and forcible expression of these religious intuitions confers a distinction and a value which is unique and almost *sui generis* on the sacred books now circulated and accepted in these Western lands. Great obscurity rests on the origin of the human race, and the earliest forms of its belief and worship. Comparative philology,

combined with a careful study of what yet subsists of aboriginal life in any part of the world, furnishes the only means of throwing light upon it. Such researches as those of Professor Max Müller are invaluable, as showing how mythology was an inevitable result of the transition of the sensuous language—the *onomatopœia*—of the first ages to a more general use and an application to the objects of moral and spiritual apprehension, and how consequently it was a necessary stage in the history of the human mind. His approximation, by a sort of exhaustive process, to the primitive language of the undivided Arian race, is one of the most beautiful specimens of acute philological disquisition ever offered to the world. It is more difficult to conceive how, by any mere natural process, any unaided action of the mind from within, mankind could rise from the gross pantheistic fetichism of the lowest form of human existence, and the polytheistic symbolism and anthropomorphism which succeeded it, to the earliest glimpse of the grand monotheistic truth of religion. We simply know the fact, that such a transition was made, and in a very early age, not by the generalising intelligence of philosophers, but through the vivid intuitions of the chiefs of a race still living in the simplicity of a nomadic and patriarchal life. So that if there be any thing which can properly claim the character of revelation in this dim twilight of human history, it must be here. Men seem to have lived at first as a part of the great material universe, hardly conscious of a personality distinct from the system of earth and seas and skies with which they were rolled round in unceasing revolution, day by day and year by year.\* The religious counterpart to this state of things was a dim pantheism, and its expression in worship—fetichism. By degrees arose the sense of personality; and with it a deepening consciousness of law, obligation, religious dependence, moral destiny. The invisible powers mysteriously enfolding human life shape themselves now into more definite forms before the mental eye, corresponding to the altered condition of the mind itself. Deities acquire a more personal character, and begin to entertain a sort of personal commerce with their worshippers. This phase of religious consciousness is reflected in the Vedantic hymns, and was probably, at the same time, in process of further development among the nations of Upper Asia. In the later productions of Hindu poetry and philosophy there was a return to a more refined pantheism. Another great section of the Arian race, whose belief is expressed in the

\* "Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,  
With rocks, and stones, and trees."

*Wordsworth.*

Zendavesta, rested in dualism. Their religion received its impress from the grand contrasts of nature and the great antagonism which pervades the world,—light and darkness, good and evil. Above this antithesis they never rose into the solution of absolute monotheism. Of this we find the first clear and positive example among the Hebrews,—in the form originally of a national God, simply one—supreme over all other gods—possessed of a distinct personal consciousness, at the furthest possible distance from every pantheistic conception—and maintaining the closest moral relations with His chosen people. This idea of God is set forth with the utmost clearness and solemnity in the law of Moses. It is developed through successive stages of higher thought and ever-widening views in the teachings of the prophets, with a constant recognition of the unity and unquestionable authority of the moral law, and of the unity of ultimate destination in the gathering of all nations in the latter days into a kingdom of God. It is consummated, expanded, spiritualised—embracing life here and life hereafter—as the last utterance of Hebrew prophecy, and the first expression of universal human religion—in the doctrine and life of Jesus of Nazareth.

These rich spiritual experiences,—these remarkable spiritual developments in the literature and history of a particular race,—have been preserved for us in a Scripture. Why we accept them as a true expression of our permanent relations to the invisible and infinite, to God and eternity, results from two causes. First, the correspondence of the great trusts and convictions thus expressed to the permanent intuitions, the constant needs, and the unceasing aspirations of the human mind—the direct and irresistible appeal to the deepest sense of our inner being, of innumerable passages in the Psalms, the Prophets, and the book of Job—of the actions and discourses, the whole life and death, of Christ himself—and of the interpretation of that life and death from the highest point of view by Paul,—carry with them an evidence of truth and reality such as religious natures experience in equal strength from no other source. In regard to moral instruction, and encouragement to the highest virtue, this sympathy with our sacred books is often independent of the speculative belief of the individual. Spinoza, as his own works testify, was a reverent and thoughtful student of Scripture; and no one can forget the terms of warm but discriminating eulogy with which the late James Mill, in a remarkable passage of his *History of British India*, extols the sober wisdom and practical utility of the religious teachings of the Bible, as compared with the mystic dreams of Hindu theosophy, so often invidiously set up against them by the sceptical



scionists of Europe. Secondly, the remarkable career marked out for the Hebrew race in the order of events, their position in the field of history, their relation to the civilisation which preceded the last expression of their prophetic spirit, and to the ensuing one which their ideas have so deeply impregnated—clearly indicate their mission in the world to have been pre-eminently providential, and commend every record of their higher thought and life, as endued with more than ordinary significance, to the earnest contemplation of all religious men. The Hebraic and the Hellenic types of mind stand out in marked contrast, as well fitted to supplement and correct each other in the highest conceivable form of human society; nor is any thing more indicative of plan in the ordering of this world's affairs, than the intermingling in the fullness of time of the calm deep stream of intuitional and prophetic influence from the hills and vales of Palestine, with the brilliant and vivacious tide of intellectual and æsthetic activity which flowed into it from the schools and theatres of Greece. The influence of Greek ideas is traceable in some of the books of the New Testament itself, and became mischievously predominant in the development of the later dogmatic system of the church. But though it may have powerfully moulded the scholastic mind of Christendom, the Hebrew element has ever been at bottom the strongest; and under its working the popular heart has imbibed its firmest convictions and holiest truths. How else could the Christian civilisation, with all its loss of primitive simplicity and purity, have become so different in its essential tendencies and features from the heathen? It is the peculiarity of the Hebraic form of religion, on which as its basis the Christian rests, that it cherishes a profound *religious* consciousness, not a mere intellectual apprehension of invisible things,—the consciousness of a Living God, and of the action of His Spirit or Word on the individual soul,—the consciousness of law and obligation, and distinct personal relationship to God,—the consciousness of a kingdom of God destined to endure, and grow, and triumph in the earth,—a great ideal of human perfection and human harmony with God, commenced *here* in darkness, ignorance, and sin, to be completed through ceaseless purification and continual development *there*. From these fresh fountains of intuition a full tide of religious inspiration flows ever into the simple trustful heart and open soul. Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, Job, without losing their personal individuality, are the organs through which God's Spirit delivers eternal truths and precious promises to the world, and awakens into uniform and consistent operation the beliefs in which the highest unity of our moral being consists. These

beliefs Christ takes up and universalises ; and transmits them, through the diversified manifestation of his disciples, as a permanent heritage to mankind, bound up with their noblest traditions, their vital interests, and their most glorious prospects.

Of this great revelation of spiritual truth through the words and deeds, the fortunes and institutions, the whole inward and outward life, of a people who are called, with distinctive propriety, the people of God,—Scripture is the witness and the record. It is, as we have already said, not so properly a book as a literature. It is not a passive medium of God's Spirit flowing through it, but the expression of a living organism of mind behind it, through which God wrought and spoke ; a history of spiritual experiences, of men's communings with God, and of God's suggestions to them, in those simple unlearned times ere artificial culture had overlaid the religious instincts of the soul, when the fountains of inspiration still flowed fresh and strong, and the spiritual eye looked out undimmed into the material universe, and saw God working at the heart of all things. It is this direct religious inspiration which characterises the prophetic teachings of Scripture, and makes the books where it is recorded a sacred literature ;—for the Spirit, when it enters a human soul, uses all modes of utterance, and takes all forms, and flows through all media. The Divine can only manifest itself through the human. But though a vehicle of the Spirit of God,—in this sense and indirectly, that is, not in letters and words and phrases, but as the faithful representative of human thought and human action, under a divine influence,—Scripture is still a literature ; and like every other literature, can only be understood, and have its real character brought to light, by subjection to a free and fearless criticism, which lays open the source of its ideas, and analyses its materials, and expounds the principle which has presided over their combination,—sets it more in a point of view to be compared with other monuments of men's deepest and holiest meditation, and, judging it by rules less technical and artificial, regards it as something living, genuine, and natural,—more deeply human, and therefore in the highest sense more divine. No criticism,—however it may affect questions of age, authorship, or derivation of materials, where we have simply to follow the evidence of facts,—can possibly destroy the force of utterances which speak directly to our moral and spiritual sense, or weaken the authority of those great religious minds which carry with them the spontaneous confidence and sympathy of every healthy nature and uncorrupted heart. The voice which commands our deference and our trust is the voice of God

speaking through history, attested by the concurring homage of the wisest and best through thousands of years. It strengthens by a force not our own, and a witness external to ourselves, the consciousness of what we feel to be divine, yet in us is often wavering and weak; and there are times when it is an unspeakable comfort to throw ourselves with implicit faith on these solemn oracles of the past, accepted as they are in their substance by the universal heart of believing and religious men, and to feel that in them we are leaning, not on our own individual reason, but on a strength and a support which come from God Himself. There are some truths which, once fully uttered, are uttered once and for ever; they cannot perish; they cannot be renewed; they are *κτῆμα ἐς αἰεί*,—a permanent heritage of man,—the broad immutable foundation on which his moral being rests. All that remains for future times is, to give them ever-new and ever-widening application, and draw out of them the spiritual elements which they are not at first perceived to involve. The doctrines of one God, the Universal Father, and of His all-embracing providence, once committed to the faith of the human soul, lie so close to its primary instincts and clearest intuition, that, however they may be overshadowed by passing doubts, they can never wholly vanish from it again. They may fade, and they may revive, with the prevalence of philosophical theories and the moral condition of society; but there they are, and there they will remain, rooted silently in the living heart of man. Who does not recall Goethe's memorable words on the death of Wieland,—that no strong-minded man ever wholly abandoned his belief in immortality? It is the clear and emphatic utterance of these great spiritual truths, affecting all our relations with the invisible world, which, once uttered, can neither be reversed nor enlarged, and their permanent embodiment in the facts of human history—that constitutes the finality of the revelation in Scripture. The Hebrews fulfilled their mission in the world's history by laying the foundation and furnishing the conditions, in their prophetic utterance and agency, of the future spiritual development of mankind. "The great nations of antiquity," says a distinguished orientalist, who has devoted his special study to the history and literature of the Hebrew race, "each pursued a separate aim, which their circumstances recommended to them, and followed it to its highest point, in some respects never reached again by any of their posterity; and as each of these nations attained its acme, and its day began to decline, it sank into a one-sided effort, as though all its powers had just sufficed to reach this highest point. But those problems of the human mind which these ancient peoples, each taking its own, solved for itself with the

most entire independence and most wonderful consequentiality, have borne for all future times, and for nations the most diverse and remote, effects of immeasurable extent, and fruits of the greatest value. This remark applies in its whole force to the very sublime and gigantic aims which engaged the energies of the ancient people of Israel.”\*

The value of Scripture as a source of moral power and religious influence is in one respect increased by what may seem at first view the negative and even destructive results of modern criticism. It is taken out of the domain of theological technicality and authoritative dogmatism, which enthrall and deaden the intellect, and left to make its appeal directly to the primitive sources of conviction and trust in every awakened soul; lifting us above this world by the evidence which it affords—in its holy men and prophets, and, above all, in Christ—of their intimate communion with God, and of the sensible witness vouchsafed to them of God’s living presence, and of that invisible state where the spirits of the departed dwell with Him. The further we advance in what is called civilisation, and in material science, the more we need the counteracting influence of those primary religious intuitions which are opened to us in a sacred history and literature like the Bible. A Scripture becomes not the less, but the more necessary, the longer society continues to exist; and Scripture, like every other genuine record of the human soul in its deepest thoughts and highest aspirations, will then first unlock to us all its treasures of spiritual wisdom, consolation, and strength, when we read it with an open eye and a trusting heart, freely yet reverently, looking for nothing but what we find, unprejudiced and sympathising;—when we ourselves are conscious in our feebleness of the presence and action of the same Spirit which flashed forth in its words of far-revealing light, and animated its holy and self-sacrificing deeds,—yea, which unites us of this day in a bond of religious identity with the noble and devoted men who, taught themselves by God, showed the childhood of our race the way that it should go, and whose sublime teachings on the great themes of human duty and expectation, have left modern reason little else to do than work out into applications of increasing extent and fertility, truths which it cannot demonstrate, and yet, when once presented, must accept.

It is true, that doubt and uncertainty on points once unhesitatingly believed, may to some extent have been produced by that fearless and impartial application to Scripture of the now-recognised laws of historical criticism, which is beginning to break down some of the old landmarks of faith, and is

\* Ewald, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel bis Christus*; Vorbereitung, p. 7.

gradually opening to the inquirer new and vaster questions, which must carry him deeper into the interior of his own being, and its mysterious relations with God : but the final result of all this will unquestionably be, to bring men back, with clearer insight, broader views, and stronger conviction, to the recognition of those eternal verities in which the soul of religion consists, and which it is the strongest witness of the divine in Scripture to reflect with such unparalleled brightness, and urge home to the soul with such resistless force. It is in this generous trust—the surest sign of faith in God—that the Chevalier Bunsen has gone to work in preparing the book of which he has just given the first part to the world. It is his object—and the effort is at once noble and courageous—to destroy all intellectual monopoly of God's universal truth ; to break up the craft and mystery of professional erudition ; to bring down the well-established results of theological research into the circle of the general reader ; to introduce the learned and the unlearned classes to mutual understanding and spiritual communion ; to show, in fine, that what is truly divine must come home to the common human heart. In how genial a spirit this work is written, the following extract will prove :

“He who preached these truths in their absolute fullness and strength,—intelligible to children, yet unsearchable by the wise,—He who by a holy life of love to God and man, and by a voluntary death, preached them once in the language of facts, and preaches them still in the voice of the Spirit,—He was a man, yea, He was MAN, even because He was only a man. He was neither Jew nor Greek, neither prince nor priest, not a rich and mighty one, but, in presence of them all, wholly a man. He lived and died for humanity. But for that very reason He is called, and was and is, God's Image and Son, as no one else before or after Him. His mortal finite being was essentially a representation of God, and had become a divine nature.

That what He saith to thee—and, indeed, as the fulfilment of all desire, and all promise, and all history—contains divine and eternal truth, thy own reason and thy own conscience will prove the sufficient warrant, if thou dost what He sets before thee as God's commandment, standing before God in genuine thankful love, and exercising the same love towards all thy brethren. He reveals to thee—in other words, He makes plain, He discovers—to thee what lies hidden in thy own reason and thy own conscience, oppressed by the weight of the creation and the necessity of nature.

Thou canst close these eyes of thy spirit to the light ; but thou canst not open them without seeing. Close them not. Why wouldst thou do so ? Here is a book, not of signs and dreams, not for dreaming and interpretation ; no, a childlike and a thoughtful book,—a book to read with open eye, and to hear with open ear. And it runs over with

comfort and light, since it speaks to thee the inmost language of thy being ; but objectively, as reality, as what has been and is. The good and the true are in their commencement,—seeking their completion in an ever-expanding kingdom of God, in a condition of mankind founded on right and justice ; and through that unfolding in the finite and the temporal, the eternal thought of creation.

This book, by its interior unity, by the truth of its single undivided consciousness of God, has guided and governed for hundreds of years our human sense, as expressed by the noblest of human races,—of our relations to the universe. It has fulfilled the sublimest hopes, and verified the holiest longings, of men,—those same hopes and longings which thou experiencest in thyself in thy gravest and most thoughtful moments. Ought it not on this account to yield light and solace to thee and to thy time ? Throw a free glance on its history, and thou wilt see that for more than four thousand years every step of mankind in advance towards light and truth and freedom and right goes hand in hand with belief in this book. Wonder not at these bold words : they are neither inconsiderate and fanatical, nor yet uttered in the spirit of hostility or a sect." (pp. 100-102.)

It is not our intention to enter into a critical analysis of M. Bunsen's book, which would hardly be in accordance with the object of the present article ; indeed the work is so loosely put together, that it would be difficult to analyse it ; but we will select from it a few passages, both as containing in themselves some valuable suggestive matter, and as throwing light on the views and purposes of the author. He speaks thus on a point which has been referred to in the foregoing pages :

"The religious sentiment of men in Europe has perished, as far as it can perish, under the double weight of absolutism and of a theological system which has renounced reason and science. But the nations demand liberty of conscience, not from unbelief, but from longing after belief. They wish for right and freedom, not that they may lead a godless and sensual life, but to be able once more to believe honestly in the Gospel. For this liberty of conscience they will know how to act and suffer, to live and die ; and the blood of their martyrs will kindle a flame by the power of God which shines through it. Misbelief and unbelief, the seeds of which have so long been sown and cultured, will combine to perplex men's minds. When the reason of conscience, with the Bible in her hand, and Jesus set before her as a model, ascends the throne, we shall see still greater abominations of misbelief and unbelief. Our age is remarkable for great and general culture of the intellect. An honest and intelligible philosophy must take its place beside our Christian faith, to ward off sophistry and materialism ; for the old scholastic system, decayed and powerless, has broken down, and every thing built on it threatens to share its ruin. The sole personality that remains as an object of faith, and the only monument of the religious consciousness which accords their equal

rights to God, to the world, and to mankind,—Jesus and the Bible,—must be brought into harmony with the science of the positive in nature and history. The unhappy schism between faith and reason must cease. . . . How can men attain and preserve freedom within the limits of law, without reverence for man as the image of God, and for humanity as the final object of the Divine intelligence, as the expression of God's will in the history of the world? How can science understand the nature of Christ, without understanding as well the misery as the greatness of human nature? How can God's Spirit in the eternal be understood, without a recognition of the Church, whose function it is to represent it in the temporal? How can the Divine thought be understood, which penetrates the universe with its breath of creative love, without a humanity which strives in faith and thankfulness to express it? Behold our aim. We are in search of the great religious truths of the world's history; not merely, however, for the scientific intellect of the philosopher, but with reference to the deepest wounds of the present, and the intensest longings of humanity." (pp. 17-19.)

On the renewed tendency of mankind towards religious belief, after periods of prevalent scepticism, we have the following remarks:

"Leibnitz attempted a justification of the moral order of the world, to tranquillise the reflecting portion of mankind. Bloody religious and political wars, which had terminated on the Continent (with the single exception of Holland) in a general rudeness of manners and the absolutism of princes, had exhausted and enfeebled the human mind, which required nourishment of this sort to fortify itself against the doubts of negative inquiry, and the spirit of despair which had seized the nations. Towards the close of the same century, Lessing and Kant endeavoured to resist the increasing materialism, which had set in especially from England and France, by strengthening the faith of reason in itself as a moral power. Already in their time the philosophy of mind had made such an advance, that it no more occurred to any one to write a justification of the world's order than to write a justification of reason itself." (p. 30.)

Considerable part of the book is written in the form of a colloquy—sometimes beautifully expressed—with the reader. In this style he approaches another side of the subject, discussed in the last extract,—the action and reaction of belief and unbelief, and shows how naturally superstition accompanies infidelity:

"And so thou standest again on the brink of the abyss, in contradiction with thyself, as with history, with the world, and with God. Consider well. To-morrow perhaps superstition will seize hold of thee, and thou wilt recommence in thyself the errors of centuries. Such a course numbers are now attempting, with a folly and a madness that

to our fathers—nay, to ourselves thirty years ago—would have seemed impossible. They would fain recall the superstitious formulas of a by-gone age, without its natural childlike faith, and its joyous sense of life. They would bring back these formulas, without the earnest faith which once ennobled and animated them. Superstition is ever born anew with faith, folly with truth. Perhaps thou wilt again take note of birds' flight, or other natural signs, like the middle ages, or heathen antiquity. Nay, thou art in danger of falling into something much worse, self-devised signs of wood and tables. But how elevated a wisdom lies in that old faith,—in the flight or cry of the living sharers of our earthly lot, which thou hast so often laughed at,—as compared with the senseless and soul-destroying divination of our time! Mormonism, slavery, appeals to the deceased, star-consulting, table-turning, are signs of the lowest declension at once of the intellect and the heart." (pp. 88-91.)

As the sole cure for such extravagances, the author suggests a rational faith in a well-attested religious system, bound up with the history of the human race—a Scripture. We will cite only one more passage:

"Whithersoever thou turnest, there remaineth for thee nothing but thy moral reason and the world's history. Yet of external histories thou dost not desire to hear. No, thou wouldst fain survey in the reflection of thousands of years the history of thy own spirit and of the eternal thought which dwells in its inner depths—yea, survey them in the mirror of a book which all can understand. It must be a book that would speak to thee of the actual, of the temporal; that would tell thee, what divine consciousness it is that has actually governed the world's history. But thou art as little desirous of a mere outward history as of a philosophical system—as little of a pious legend as of a deep-thoughted myth. The book must contain a true historical kernel, and reflect back to thee a genuine, personal, human consciousness. It must possess a unity in itself—a luminous centre-point for what is dark—an inner-soul for its outward manifestation. It must exhibit to thee the eternal and the temporal—the eternal as the temporal, the temporal as the eternal. It must give thee answer to the questions: 'Whence comes this race of men? Whither is it going?' To this issue all thy questionings finally tend. It is after this that something within thee inquires, not from mere curiosity, or the thirst for scientific lore. It is the purely human within thee that impels thee with a divine power to ask: 'Whence do I come? Whither do I go? What ought I to do?' And simply because this longing is within thee, and thou hast the living faith that the realities of history, rightly viewed, must meet it with their verification,—that there must be a divine answer to it, adjusted to the wants of our time,—precisely for this reason, mankind do possess such a book. This book is called by thy own people, by the world in which thou livest—'the Book'—'the Scripture'; it is the book in the highest sense." (pp. 92, 93.)



We may judge from this extract, in how popular—in some passages we might say, how rhetorical—a tone, a large portion of M. Bunsen's book is written. Some of its best criticisms are those on the prophets, into the spirit of whose teachings it enters with a full and genial recognition. Those on Joel, Jonah, and Daniel are remarkable for their happy union of unbiased freedom of judgment with strong religious feeling. Speaking of the forced interpretations so often put on the latter writer, in defiance of history and criticism, he says, "We are not to make the pious patriot and seer a liar, in order to make him a prophet after our own system." (p. 530.) If more scriptural criticism were expressed in this tone of mingled honesty and reverence, it would render great service to genuine religion, and help to raise the Bible, often so blindly read and so dimly felt, to its proper rank as the grandest literature in the world.

Not seldom M. Bunsen has reminded us in this book of Herder. He has all the fervour, and something of the vagueness and generality, of that graceful and suggestive writer. With many claims on our approval, the present work has some obvious defects. Its general views are often sounder than the particular applications of them. The author draws his inferences in many cases too confidently from slight resemblances and uncertain grounds. His reference of the prophetic faculty to a purified *clairvoyance* (pp. 142-151) will not, we suspect, meet with general acceptance; and his unhesitating ascription to Baruch, the amanuensis of Jeremiah, of works so different in style and in thought as Lamentations, the latter part of Isaiah, and Job, does not appear to us to satisfy the conditions of a cautious and discriminating criticism. Altogether the work lacks compression, and a more systematic distribution of its materials. It wants also a more uniform and consistent character. It exhibits too great a mixture of the learned and the popular. It professes to be written for the instruction of the general reader; yet for this purpose the philosophical introduction is too abstruse and obscure, and is marked by too constant a recurrence of abstract formulas of thought borrowed from the schools. In some of the insulated disquisitions,—the result apparently of the learned researches of former years,—the author goes minutely into critical questions of which only scholars are competent to judge. Other parts of his subject, again, he has treated with a superficiality of which the learned will be apt to complain. Judging from a rapid survey of his work, we suspect that he has left himself open to attack in several points of detail. If it be so, we shall much regret it; because it will furnish those who grudge his useful labours, and are envious of his wide social

influence, with a plausible pretext for depreciating them, and may blind others to the real merit and noble purpose of his undertaking. We are jealous of M. Bunsen's reputation. Germany at this time can ill afford any lessening of the moral and intellectual weight of such a man on behalf of popular enlightenment and religious freedom. His high social position, his antecedents, and his being a simple unfettered layman, qualify him in no ordinary degree for mediating between the hard material unbelief and the rigid uncompromising orthodoxy, which threaten for the present to divide his country between them; while his genial spirit, his comprehensive views, his wide and ready sympathy with all that is good and generous, must commend much of what he writes—could he only abridge its volume and simplify its expression—to the cordial acceptance of the popular mind. It would be a public misfortune, if any hasty assertions and unguarded statements, inviting hostile and unscrupulous criticism, should weaken the impression and limit the circulation of a book which, though it may not in its present form fully satisfy the demands of the scientific, nor fully meet the wants of the less instructed, is still conceived in the true spirit of religious earnestness, and is sent out bravely and honestly in the right direction.

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ART. VII.—THE MEMOIRS OF ST. SIMON.

*Mémoires complets et authentiques du Duc de Saint-Simon sur le Siècle de Louis XIV et la Régence, collationnés sur le manuscrit original par M. Chéruel, et précédés d'une Notice par M. Sainte-Beuve, de l'Académie Française.* Paris, 1856-7. Hachette et Cie.

THE *Memoirs of St. Simon* were first published in a complete shape after an almost exact interval of a century had elapsed since the period to which the record of his times was brought down by the author. They end with the year 1723, and the first edition was published in 1829. After the death of St. Simon, they passed out of the hands of his family, and were kept under the control of the government, from a fear of indiscreet revelations. Privileged persons were, however, suffered to have access to the manuscripts; and the Duke of Choiseul, when minister, lent some of the volumes to Madame du Deffand, who wrote to Horace Walpole in extreme delight at the stores of

amusement and gossip she found in these unknown memoirs. In and after 1784, portions began to get into print, and small compilations or mutilated extracts were published at intervals; and at last, in 1829, the whole memoirs were given to the world. Since that time the interest they have excited has gone on steadily increasing; and several fresh editions have appeared, each aiming at greater correctness of text and greater convenience of reference. A new edition is now in course of publication at Paris, adorned with every luxury of type and paper, most carefully edited by M. Chéruel, and preceded by a notice of St. Simon written by M. Sainte-Beuve. No one can wonder that Frenchmen should recur with unwearied eagerness to a writer who paints the inner life of the great era of the French monarchy, who has so many national qualities in an eminent degree, whose wit, causticity, and felicity of expression are so peculiarly French, and who has left so many exquisite portraits of French men and women. In England, however, the number of persons who read through these memoirs will always be very small; and there will probably never be an Englishman who can say, as M. Sainte-Beuve says, that he has read them through ten times. Fortunately there is no book in which it is so easy to dip: we are amused, and can understand what we read, if we open any part of any volume of this long series. All that we require, in order to do this with pleasure and profit, is to know the general outline of St. Simon's life, the general cast of his character, and the more prominent faults and excellencies of his memoirs. We shall attempt in the following pages to lay before our readers a brief sketch of what a cursory and irregular reader of St. Simon might be glad to know beforehand.

Louis de Saint-Simon was born in 1675, and was the only son of Claude first Duke of Saint-Simon. His father had risen through the personal favour of Louis XIII.; and he is said to have owed this favour to an ingenious device, by which he enabled the monarch to pass from one horse to another without touching the ground. When the Duke of Orleans forced his brother to make Puylaurens a "duke and peer," the king comforted himself by conferring a similar distinction on his chief equerry; and it was thus that the father gained the dignity which it was the great business of the son's life to uphold. After the death of Louis XIII., the Duke of Saint-Simon lived retired and forgotten in the country. His son was born to him when he was far advanced in years, and the boy grew up in an almost complete isolation from persons of his own rank. His mother, who was of the family of Laubepine Chateauneuf, had no near relations who could be of assistance to her son; and

she often strove to impress the boy with a notion of the difficult task that lay before him in life,—the task of upholding his nominal position without great estates or high connections. She strove to give him the best education in her power; but he confesses that his taste for study and for science was too small to permit her endeavours to be very effective. For history, however, he felt a real relish; and it was his admiration for the old chroniclers of France that determined him, at the early age of nineteen, to attempt to emulate their fame, and himself write the memoirs of his own time.

He entered the army when he was sixteen; and being required, like all the young nobles of his day, to join one of the two regiments of musketeers, he was placed in that of the "Greys," as the captain, Maupertuis, was an old friend of his father. His family had great difficulty in providing the proper outfit and equipage for the young soldier; and their embarrassment was increased by the roguery of a steward, who chose this unlucky time to decamp with fifty-thousand francs. St. Simon served with credit at the siege of Namur and the battle of Neerwinde. He rose to the rank of captain, and commanded a regiment called by his name; but he never got any further. He was not in the line of promotion. He went to court, as every young officer and nobleman went, as a matter of course, but he was never in favour: he came there backed by no support from influential families; he did not make his way there by rendering any service to Madame de Maintenon. He felt the depressing hopelessness of his position; and the consolation to which he had recourse was that of writing his beloved memoirs, noting every little fact that could form a part of them, practising his powers of observation, learning to look on men and things with that penetration, and to paint them with that fidelity, which had attracted him in the pages of Froissart, Joinville, and Ville-Hardouin. The world has profited by the bitter mortifications to which the young Vidame de Chartres, as he was called during his father's lifetime, must have found himself subjected. Had he been noticed, flattered, and promoted, he would have been much too busy and contented to have given us these voluminous and cynical memoirs.

The first Duke of St. Simon died in 1693; and in 1694 the young duke was urged by Madame de St. Simon to marry. Her son was willing to follow her advice; but said, that nothing would tempt him to a misalliance, and yet that he must have money. He therefore requested time to look about him; and his choice soon settled on the Duke of Beauvilliers. It was this nobleman whom, he expressly tells us, he wished to marry, through the medium of one of the duke's daughters. The duke

was not only of a high and widely-connected family, but of a remarkably pious, upright, and noble character ; and St. Simon was attracted to him as much by his high qualities as by the advantages which the alliance promised. He accordingly unfolded his wishes to the duke ; who was astonished at his frankness, and explained to him that his eldest daughter was only fifteen, his second was deformed, and his third was only twelve ; and that the eldest had a strong wish to become a nun. St. Simon explained that it was not the young lady, but her parents, who had attracted him ; and that he would make a marriage-contract on any terms the duke wished. The eldest daughter was, however, firm ; and St. Simon then asked for the little girl of twelve. The duchess was much struck with the "prodigious ardour" with which St. Simon desired to enter her family ; but she could not help refusing ; and so St. Simon had to look elsewhere. He fixed on the Marshal de Lorges. This commander was the nephew of Turenne, and had enriched himself by a marriage with the daughter of one of Colbert's favourites. His honesty and frankness had captivated St. Simon, who had served under him. St. Simon saw that the whole army loved him, that he enjoyed general esteem, that he lived magnificently ; and that he had an elder brother of great distinction, with whom he was on excellent terms. He further saw that madame la maréchale was exactly the wife he should have wished for himself, as she had got her husband made a duke, received the best company in her house, and lived happily with all her family. This excellent couple accepted the young duke, and proceeded to discuss which of their two marriageable daughters they should give him. They decided on the eldest ; and St. Simon tells us, that when he saw the two young ladies, he much preferred his intended bride. He was married in 1695, a few months before he had completed his twenty-first year.

However unromantic may have been the manner in which he won this lady, no marriage could have been more fortunate, and no wife could have been a more faithful and valuable friend to him. The language which St. Simon employs in referring to this excellent woman, and the passages in which he records the influence exerted by her at many critical moments of his life, are among the most charming and touching parts of the memoirs. He does not often speak directly of her, he is too noble and right-minded to obtrude the merits of his wife on his readers ; but he lets us see by many slight touches how great a treasure he had found in her. When he first introduces her to us, he slightly sketches her portrait ; but he maintains the reserve of a gentleman, and speaks of her with equal grace and dignity.

“She was,” he says, “a blonde, with a perfect complexion and figure, a most agreeable expression, an air extremely noble and modest, and with something almost majestic about her from her manifest virtue and natural sweetness. As she became my wife, I will abstain from saying more of her,—except that she has infinitely surpassed all that I was promised I should find in her, all the reports I heard of her, all that I myself hoped she might be.” Ten years after his marriage, there was some reason to suppose that St. Simon would receive an offer of the embassy to Rome. He hesitated whether to accept it or not, as he was not sure whether his fortune would bear the expense; and he and Madame de St. Simon consulted three ministers on the subject. They advised St. Simon to go; and after telling us that he consented at last to adopt their advice, he proceeds to say: “I cannot here refuse myself the pleasure of recording what each of those three ministers said separately to me of a lady who was then only twenty-seven years of age. They advised me, and they all advised me earnestly, to have no secret from my wife in all the affairs of my embassy; to have her with me at my table while I read and answered despatches, and to consult her on every thing with deference.” What follows shows that both husband and wife had qualities that were good guarantees for conjugal happiness,—the husband generosity, the wife discretion. “I have rarely,” St. Simon continues, “heard any advice with so keen a pleasure; and I think it an equal merit in her to have deserved such a thing to be said of her, and ever afterwards to have lived as if she had not known it had been said; and yet she did know it, both from me, and afterwards from those who had spoken to me.” She appears throughout the memoirs as the guardian and good angel of her husband; smoothing away the difficulties into which his morose and haughty temper threatened repeatedly to plunge him, and making the life of a court endurable to one who had few of the qualities requisite to place him among the leaders of the court circle, and fewer still of those requisite to make him contented with a secondary position.

St. Simon needed a supporter ever ready at his side; for he made his position at Versailles, already a precarious and disagreeable one, much worse by abruptly quitting the army; a step which the king seems to have considered almost a personal affront. St. Simon was offended by the promotion of junior officers to the rank of brigadier. Unfortunately for himself, St. Simon was thus thrown entirely into the vapid and barren life of the court, without the exchange to excitement and activity which occasional service would have offered him. This enforced leisure was perhaps fortunate for posterity,

as it gave him so many opportunities of collecting materials for his memoirs. At the same time, it is impossible not to regret that the time in which he lived was so poor a one; the theatre so narrow; the actors so indifferent. Had his lot fallen on a time when great men were occupied in doing great things,—at one of those epochs when the life of a nation seems to be aroused, and thought and resolution are stimulated into a widespread activity,—he might, with his great powers and high sympathies, have written memoirs that would have been much better worth having. It is a great thing to have the vices, the hypocrisies, and intrigues of a worn-out and hollow age exposed by the fine analysis of a merciless wit; but it is a much greater thing to have what is worthy of admiration recorded by a man who has the capacity to admire.

We see at once both the shortcomings of the age and the peculiar cast of St. Simon's own mind reflected in all that he did and wrote concerning matters of religion. He found little to reverence, and much to suspect, in the religious conduct of those around him. This attitude of indifference is partly to be attributed to his natural temper, but partly also to the disgust which must have been awakened in any man of sense and honour by the low intrigues of the clique of fanatics who traded on the growing infirmity of the old king. St. Simon was a man of piety, both by nature and by education; but he was not a man of enthusiasm, much less of zeal. He could not bring himself to care much for any of the religious factions of his day; although, had he lived at a different period, he would have been quite capable of appreciating the fervour of a genuine and simple piety. He regarded with real feelings of indignation and alarm the forced subjection of the Gallican church to the famous Bull *Unigenitus*; but then his alarm was grounded on reasons purely political. By his friendship with the Dukes of Beauvilliers and Chevreuse he was constantly thrown among the Quietists, and by his position at Versailles he was brought into constant communication with the Jesuits; but he stood aloof from the interests of either party. He loved the Duke and Duchess of Beauvilliers better than any people beyond his own family; but he always speaks of them, and the other admirers of Fénélon, as a little knot of bewildered devotees. He dreaded the Jesuits, and considered their alliance with Madame de Maintenon to be the bane of France; but he took care to keep on a very good footing, and to be very friendly and familiar, with the king's confessor. He has described at very considerable length the impressions produced on him by all he had seen of Fénélon and of Father Tellier; but admirable as the portraits of the two are in effectiveness of design, and skill

of execution, we know that, to have regarded the subject from a point of view so wholly artistic, implies that sort of coldness and perhaps timidity in the painter, which may possibly make him better as an observer, but certainly lowers him as a man. We may be sure that, in the description of Fénelon there are many touches from the life; but we should perhaps have liked St. Simon better, although we might have enjoyed this portion of his memoirs less, if he had been a little blind to the faults of the Archbishop of Cambray. "Fénelon," he says, "had more coquetry than a woman; but he showed it in his whole manner, not in petty trifles: his passion was to please; and he took as much care to captivate the valet as the master, the lowest as the highest. He had talents exactly made for the purpose: sweetness, a power of insinuation, graces springing fresh from a natural source, a mind facile, ingenuous, copious, and agreeable, of which he held, so to speak, the tap, so as to be able to pour from it the exact quality and quantity suitable to each person. Without undertaking to fathom him, one may boldly say, that he had the greatest possible desire to attain eminence of place; and yet he did the work of his diocese so well, and seemed to enjoy the peace of his quiet life so thoroughly, that none but those who knew what he had been, and what he wished to be, could have detected the real feelings of his heart." So mixed are the motives of even the best men, that it is only probable that St. Simon may have been right in ascribing some part of Fénelon's excellence to his "passion for making himself loved;" but a man with a generous love of goodness would scarcely have singled out this passion as the master-key to the whole of Fénelon's career.

So, too, when he has to record the choice of another confessor for the king in place of Father la Chaise, and is thus led to sketch the character of the person selected, he uses terms of the utmost unreserve and severity, which, if taken as the index of his real thoughts, are strangely at variance with his outward behaviour. "Tellier," he says, "both from taste and habit, led a hard life; he knew of no existence but that of assiduous and uninterrupted work; and he exacted such work from others without ever making any allowances, and without even understanding that any ought to be made. His head and his health were of iron, and his conduct was in keeping; his natural disposition was cruel and stern. Imbued with the maxims and principles of the Society of Jesus, so far as his hard nature could permit him to yield himself to others, he was profoundly false and deceitful; concealing himself under a thousand folds of disguise, and when he dared to show himself, asking for every thing and giving nothing, and laughing at his most solemn promises when



it did not suit him to keep them. He was a terrible man, aiming at nothing short of the destruction of all whom he hated; and after obtaining power, he no longer coucealed his aims." Very probably St. Simon was justified in using this language, which is strong; but in the next page we find that Father Tellier, soon after he was appointed the king's confessor, sent a Jesuit, who had formerly been St. Simon's tutor, to open friendly relations with St. Simon; that the overture was favourably received, and that St. Simon kept on excellent terms with Tellier during the whole time that Tellier was powerful. Of course, it may be said that it was but worldly wisdom to do so, and that St. Simon could not have held on at court unless he had made friends with the mammon of unrighteousness. This is true; but it makes a considerable difference in our estimate of a man's character, whether we find that he does or does not possess that suppleness of nature which lies at the bottom of worldly wisdom. Among the persons who were acute enough to see the real character of the confessor, some few would have spurned all connection with him; while others would naturally take care not to commit themselves in any violent or underhand act, but would prudently make friends with the closet-friend of Madame de Maintenon. St. Simon was one of the latter class; and we know something more about him when we find that this was the case.

But if St. Simon did not display any great relish for the religious contests and controversies of his day, there was one subject in which he took the most deep and lively interest. He devoted himself heart and soul to the cause of his order. He was absorbed in the thought of the greatness to which the "dukes and peers" of France were entitled, and of which they had been robbed. It is easy to see in the attitude he assumed in prosecuting his claim to honours the reflex of his personal position. He was the son of a precise formal courtier, long the favourite of a king; he had been brought up by his mother to believe that he must in some way assert himself, or so unfriended a man would be sure to be neglected; he lived in habits of familiarity with noblemen shut out from the great prizes of the new *régime*, but still sustained by the consciousness of their ancient dignities. And yet it must be confessed, that St. Simon's persistency in claiming what he believed to be his due was justified by something better than the exigencies of his personal ambition. He saw that the power of the nobility was shaken, if not shattered; he believed that this was a most serious evil for the state; and he wished, if he could, to stay the last stroke, which would complete the work of destruction. The particular point which he made all-important seems at this day trivial, and even ludicrous; but we think that some

of his modern French critics have too hastily assumed that he was entirely wrong. The king and the parliament had acted together to depress the nobility; and it was the great aim of St. Simon to repress the usurpations, each petty in itself, by which the parliament strove to mark its growing sense of superiority. There is certainly something absurd in the quarrel about the "bonnet," which occupies so many pages of the memoirs; but, on the other hand, we must admit that, unless a losing side contests every little point resolutely, it invites its own downfall. We must remember, that the contest took place in the last years of the reign of Louis XIV.; and it was not unreasonable to insist, that if the nobles could but hold their ground during the king's life, they might do more at a future time. Originally, the peers, that is, the grand feudatories holding directly of the king, and such other high barons as the king was pleased to summon, alone constituted the parliament; but they were assisted by legists in their deliberations. Gradually these legists came to be a constituent part of the assembly; and the peers, though holding the place of honour, had little real influence in the proceedings of parliament. Lastly, when, under Richelieu and Louis XIV., the nobles were reduced step by step to a lower position, the legal portion of the parliament grudged the peers even the outward marks of deference. The president, always a lawyer, took the votes of the assembly; and the crowning insult protested against by St. Simon was, that the president took the votes of the princes of the blood with his head uncovered, but replaced his "bonnet" on his head when he came to the dukes and peers. For many years St. Simon made it the object of his life to get this innovation set aside. He even made himself so prominent and officious as to draw down on him the unfavourable wishes of the king; but still he persevered. He also deeply resented the promotion of the king's illegitimate children to a rank intermediate between that of princes of the blood and that of dukes and peers, because it was a slur on the latter that any person not acknowledged to be of the royal family should be placed above them. The opposition which this promotion excited brought the Duke of Maine into a close understanding with the parliament; and St. Simon and his supporters had then a very difficult game to play; for the Duke of Maine had the king's ear, and his support enabled the parliament to set the dukes and peers at defiance.

In the year, however, before the king's death, it seemed as if there was a chance of matters taking a favourable turn for the remonstrants. The Duke of Maine had been raised to the rank of a prince of the blood, and declared capable of succeed-

ing to the crown ; and gross as was the scandal of such an elevation, yet St. Simon was almost, if not quite, consoled for it by its involving the abolition of the intermediate rank, which he had regarded with so much horror. And shortly after he had thus attained the summit of his wishes, the Duke of Maine proposed to settle the affair of the "bonnet." St. Simon stigmatises this proposal as being really the fruit of the blackest treachery. He thinks the Duke of Maine feared lest, after the king's death, the parliament and the nobility should join to deprive the bastards of all their honours; and that he therefore arranged a plot by which the two parties should be separated by an irreconcilable difference. He used the president of the parliament as his instrument; and after getting the dukes to state their claim, on an understanding that the parliament would yield, he made the president turn round and refuse to admit the claim in a manner so insulting as to awaken a feeling of the utmost indignation in the peers. The Duke of Maine having thus effected his object, having committed the parliament to support him, and provided against the junction he feared, finally broke off all negotiation on the point, by saying that he found that a member of the royal family, the Princess of Condé, would never consent to the affair of the "bonnet" being arranged as the peers wished, because it was only proper that some mark of distinction should show their inferiority to the princes of the blood-royal. Thus the matter ended; and certainly, after reading all that St. Simon has to say on the subject, the antiquarian researches into which he digresses, the bitterness of the language he employs, and the foulness of the motives he imputes to his adversaries, it seems a little ludicrous to find that the termination of the whole was due to the caprice of a lady who was generally acknowledged to be imbecile. But subsequent events showed that there was still some little power left with the nobles; and, small as it was, it might have been worth securing. We are inclined to think that wiser men than St. Simon might have taken much the same view of the affair as he did; although they would, perhaps, have been more moderate in their language, and more temperate in estimating the importance of what they were doing.

We know, indeed, that his views were substantially shared by one man, who, if longer life had been granted him, might have changed the history of France. The remarkable and enlightened prince who, in 1711, succeeded to the title of Dauphin, was, we cannot refuse to believe, penetrated with a wise conviction, that the growth of bureaucracy threatened the stability of the French monarchy. St. Simon gives the out-

line of many conversations which he held with the Dauphin ; and although he may, in his enthusiasm, sometimes substitute his own feelings and expressions for those of the prince, yet there is not the slightest reason to doubt that, quite independently of all influence exercised on him by the Duke of Beauvilliers and by St. Simon himself, the Dauphin had come to a conclusion, that if he lived to ascend the throne, it was his true policy to restore the dignity and renew the importance of the nobility. He seems to have been deeply impressed by the spectacle of arrogant functionaries setting themselves above men of the first rank, and exacting the title, which they denied to dukes and peers, of "Monseigneur." And it is worth noticing, that St. Simon represents the Dauphin as repeatedly referring his opinions to his long study of the history of his country. Such a study is the surest possible basis of conviction ; and probably there is much truth in the observation of the Dauphin, that the great source of all that was faulty in the policy of his grandfather was his ignorance, and especially his surprising ignorance of all that had happened in the reigns of his more immediate predecessors. No wonder that St. Simon mourned the untimely loss of the prince as a loss hardly to be spoken of,—a loss that clouded over all his own personal hopes, and overshadowed the future of his country.

The grave that opened so prematurely for the Dauphin, soon closed over the great king himself ; and the chapters of the memoirs which follow the curious narrative of the king's death, are some of the best which St. Simon has written. They review the general character of the long reign of Louis XIV. ; they survey the salient features of his mind, record the habits of his life, and trace the history of those influences which led him to so much disgrace and into so many errors. They are rich, both in the fruits of mature reflection, and in the minute touches of a keen observer. St. Simon apologises for describing what all his contemporaries knew so well ; but his apology is the satisfactory one, that he is consulting the wishes of posterity in telling how the grand monarch looked and spoke, how he dressed and eat. To enter into the details of this picture would be to write about Louis XIV., and not about St. Simon. We are at present only interested in showing what there is in the picture which peculiarly betrays the hand of the painter. St. Simon places before himself and his readers the problem of a mixed character,—a man so great yet so small, so commanding and yet so weak. He takes a delight in drawing out the inconsistencies of the king ; and the solution he offers is one which is at least plausible and subtle. He thinks that Louis had by nature a mind beneath medio-

crity, but that this mind was one capable of forming, refining, and polishing itself, of borrowing from others without either the labour or the humiliation of direct copying, and of seizing the results at which other minds had arrived. We must take into account the utter ignorance in which the bad education of his early years had left him. He possessed scarcely any knowledge of the most common events of history; he could hardly read or write. It is not difficult to suppose that such a man should be at once very dependent on the few to whom he looked to supply the means of carrying on affairs, and very distrustful of the great body of those from the observation of whose conduct he was gaining experience. This is the union on which St. Simon fixes our attention,—the union of dependence on a few intimates, and reserve and distrust towards the bulk of the nobility. The fact that Louis XIV. suffered himself to be guided by a succession of cliques, and that he stood aloof from the great nobles, who might have offered him independent aid and advice, is indisputable. To us who look back, it seems one of the stages in the transition that changed the government of France from that of an aristocracy to that of a bureaucracy. To St. Simon it appeared to spring directly from certain points in the character and history of Louis. He views the fortunes of his country from the point which his position had enabled him to occupy,—that of watching the trust and distrust felt by the ignorant but shrewd man, who said that the state was himself.

St. Simon several times recurs to an anecdote, which he tells as illustrating the consequences of the trust reposed by Louis XIV. in those whom he consulted. After the death of Colbert, Louvois was charged with the superintendence of the royal buildings. The Chateau of Trianon was being built, when one day the king remarked that a window was out of proportion. Louvois asserted the contrary, and would not yield. The king turned away; but the next day he sent to the architect, Le Nôtre, to settle the point in question. The architect was afraid to disagree with either, and day after day made excuses for not going; at last Louis got angry, and told him to be at Trianon the next day, and that Louvois should be there too. The king himself went at the appointed time, and ordered Le Nôtre to measure the window in his presence. Louvois, indignant at this, vented his anger aloud, and sharply maintained the window was all right. The king proved to be right; and turning to Louvois, upbraided him with his obstinacy, which had nearly led to the building having been completed without the mistake being rectified, in which case it would have been necessary to pull it down and rebuild it. Louvois arrived at his house in a

furious passion, and then declared that he was lost with the king after having undergone such treatment about the window. "I have no other resource than a war, which shall distract the king from his buildings, and which shall make me indispensable to him; and, by God! he shall have one." Accordingly, in a few months the war broke out which only ended with the Peace of Ryswick. The moral St. Simon draws, is, of course, that Louis, by his foolish dependence on Louvois, put it into the power of a minister to involve Europe in a bloody war because he had been mistaken about the proportions of a window. It is a good instance of the sort of light which the memoirs of St. Simon throw on the history of the time. Undoubtedly there were far deeper causes of the war of 1688 than the irritability of the French minister; but the age of Louis XIV. was a period when the caprice of a very few individuals could decide when and where wars should break out, and with what bitterness and pertinacity they should be conducted. St. Simon was therefore very probably right in connecting the outbreak of the war with the ill-humour of Louvois; and we need not reject this piece of court-gossip as utterly immaterial.

A vain and clever man like Louis was not, however, to be drawn or led without some management; and it was her consummate tact, rather than any higher or more fascinating quality, that enabled Madame de Maintenon to preserve her strange ascendancy during a period of thirty years. St. Simon has drawn an invaluable picture of this lady practising her arts of government. He tells us, that every evening the king went to her apartments; and that a minister attended to transact business. Whilst he and his sovereign were discussing affairs of state, Madame de Maintenon read or worked. She listened to all that passed between her two visitors; but rarely broke in upon their conversation, and still more rarely said any thing of importance. Often the king asked her advice, and then she answered very guardedly. Never, or scarcely ever, did she suffer herself to seem to have any preference, and still less to have any interest, in behalf of any particular individual; but she took care always somehow or other to agree with the minister, who in turn never ventured to dispute with her. The truth was, that when any favour was to be obtained, or appointment to be filled up, she let the minister know that she wished to speak with him; and it often happened that day after day went by without any opportunity offering for a conference that should not attract attention. After they had agreed on the person to be appointed, but not before, the minister was at liberty to mention the matter to the king at one of these evening meetings. He brought a list of persons eligible for the purpose, and showed

it to the king for selection. If the king in reading it stopped at the right name, the minister immediately chimed in, and said that nothing could be better; if he selected the wrong man, the minister represented that it would be better to read the list through before making a choice. He avoided any direct advocacy of the claims of the man whom he favoured, but merely introduced his name among a few others as the best on the list. He dwelt on the merits of each of these in turn; and made them out to be all of such very equal eligibility, that the king got puzzled, and began to wish for assistance in making his choice. The minister then hinted slight objections to all but the right man. Louis would turn in his uncertainty to Madame de Maintenon; who smiled, and said she knew nothing about such things (*faisait l'incapable*), and sometimes said a word or two in favour of one of the other candidates, and then finally came back to the destined man as perhaps the best after all. In this way, St. Simon says, she disposed as she pleased of more than three-fourths of the places vacant; and the few she did not care to interfere with, she permitted the minister to fill up. It was only very rarely indeed that the king, who prided himself on being the single source of power, really made an appointment, either from some caprice, or because he had been influenced in behalf of a candidate by an application coming from some one whom he wished to favour.

St. Simon was a good hater, and perhaps never hated any one more bitterly than the lady,—the *mauvaise fée*, as he often calls her,—who played this little farce every night with undiminished success for so many years; but he hated her on public grounds, and there is a loftiness in his scorn of her which we cannot expect to find in his derisive sketches of private enemies. Especially he hated her for her cruelty in religious persecutions. “She was,” he says, “herself in part the dupe of Cardinal Bissy; by whose arts, and by the praises he bestowed on her, under the guise of a mock simplicity, she was persuaded that she was the prophetess who saved the people of God from error, revolt, and impiety.” Filled with this idea, urged on by Bissy, and wishing for the mere love of power to mix herself up more and more with ecclesiastical affairs, she impelled the king to exercise all the horrible tyranny that was then directed against the consciences, the fortunes, and the persons of her victims. She too was the great cause of the other disgrace of France, which St. Simon so bitterly lamented, the scandalous advancement of the king’s bastard sons; an advancement so preposterous, that the offspring of a double adultery, as St. Simon delights in perpetually calling them, were made capable of succeeding to the throne. The finest passages that St. Simon ever wrote are

inspired by the indignation with which the promotion of the bastards and its fatal consequences moved him. He dilates on the monstrous profligacy of the unions which Louis compelled his legitimate descendants to form with the children and grandchildren of his mistress. "This mixture," he says, "of the purest blood of any royal race with the polluted filth of a double adultery, was the one great work of the king's life. He had the horrible satisfaction of having carried this admixture to the last point of completeness; and he has been the first man, in any nation or age, who has raised from the nothingness of obscurity the issue of a double adultery, and given it a position at which the whole world, civilised and barbarous, at first shuddered, but which it has since learnt to tolerate by growing accustomed to the spectacle." St. Simon then traces the sad story of the wars which dishonoured the last years of the king's reign, and brought him to the very verge of ruin. No one who had lived at the court of Versailles during that time of humiliation could forget the narrowness of the escape by which the king avoided the impending blow; and St. Simon notices how strange it was, that a foolish caprice of one or two foolish women in England should have raised up France from the dust. Louis profited by another sovereign being guided by dependents in the same manner, in which he himself had been led into danger. "After Louis had been brought," St. Simon eloquently says, "to the brink of the precipice, with an ample and fearful interval of time given him to recognise the depth of the abyss, the all-powerful hand of God, which places nothing more than a few grains of sand as limits of the most furious storms of the sea, arrested all at once the ruin of this presumptuous and haughty monarch, after having made him taste to the full his misery, his weakness, and his nothingness; and the cause which wrought this wonderful result was slight and small as the sand of the sea-shore. A woman's quarrel for nothing, in the household of the Queen of England, and the queen's vague wish to favour her own blood, detached England from the grand alliance."

The accession of the Duke of Orleans to the great power of a regent seemed to promise a change for the better; and especially it seemed to promise to St. Simon an opportunity of devoting his energies to the service of his country. It was reasonable to suppose, that the regent would be guided by no one so much as by St. Simon, who had been his intimate friend for many years; who had ventured, and had been permitted, to reprove and counsel when the duke's connection with Madame d'Argenson had threatened him with the gravest dangers; and who was the only person of high rank that dared to display con-



fidence in him when popular calumny accused him of having had a share in the sudden deaths that occurred with such alarming rapidity in the royal family in 1712. Time was to show that the real guide of the regent would be a much more base and dishonest man than St. Simon; but, at any rate, the regent always treated St. Simon with the greatest consideration; and if he did not follow his advice, allowed him to give it with the most perfect absence of restraint.

St. Simon has left us a long and minute account of his views as to the changes which he considered most advisable. Both the propositions which he lays down, and the reasoning by which he supports them, throw a curious light on his character, on the powers of his mind, and on the position which he occupied in the court of Louis XIV. There is much ingenuity, much address, and a sort of logic, in all he says. But it must have been evident to his contemporaries, what is so very evident to us, that he was talking in vain; that he was utterly out of the sphere of the possible and the practical, and that he could not have governed France for a day. The measures which he chiefly advocated were three: the substitution of councils for ministers of state, a national bankruptcy, and the assembling of the states-general. St. Simon had that sort of ability, and that sort of interest in politics which impel financial amateurs in these days to write pamphlets on the currency. He really wished to serve his country, he really believed that he had an infallible receipt for setting every thing right; and having fixed on a hobby, he had a curious consistency and adroitness in working it out. We at once are surprised by his plan, admire, and laugh at it. Such a man is incapable of understanding general questions asked to test his plans: if he meets with fundamental criticism, he stops it with some clever little contrivance of detail. He has an answer ready for every thing, and is the victim of his own fertility of resource. No one can understand St. Simon who does not make himself acquainted with these strange views of policy. While we only read St. Simon's criticism on others, we hardly know what sort of a man the critic was,—how far he was superior to those whom he criticised, or how far fitted to teach them. When we have studied these chapters on state-affairs, we see at once why he was left to be an observer; and at the same time are strengthened in our belief of the honesty and acuteness with which he would be likely to observe.

The first question he set himself to solve was this: How were the functionaries who had supplanted the old nobility in the charge of state-affairs to be got rid of? "My object," he says, "was gradually to place the nobility in the position of

ministers, and give them suitable dignity and authority at the expense of the gentlemen of the robe and the pen ; and by judicious management, to contrive that these new-comers should at last cease to exercise any functions but those that were purely judicial." The great difficulty was, as he admits, in the nobility itself ; which was used to nothing except to get killed in war, to rise in the service by seniority, and to spend life in a deadly uselessness, and in its attendant idleness and incapacity. The formation of councils to manage the different departments of state was the remedy he proposed. In the first place, the change would get rid of the hated ministers,—“ those five kings who exercised all the tyranny they pleased in the name of the true king.” In the next place, it would conciliate the nobles, as “ this sudden and unhopèd-for return from nothing to a new existence would equally allure those who immediately profited by it, and those who hoped to profit by it at a future period.” St. Simon says, that a scheme almost the same had occurred to the Duke of Chevreuse ; and that his own scheme had received the approval of the Duke of Burgundy. We cannot, therefore, connect the mere outline of the plan in any especial way with St. Simon ; but some of the details into which he carried it are very characteristic. It struck him that the chief of each council might usurp so much authority as to make his subordinates mere shadows. This was exactly the sort of difficulty which St. Simon delighted in dealing with. He quite revels in the little devices which he hits off for snubbing the imaginary chief ; and it must be owned, that he does his work effectually, and that the chief would not have had much chance of making himself overpowering, if all these engines of repression had been brought to bear on him. St. Simon proposed that the chief should always speak the last ; that he should allot the different portions of business to the members in full council ; never himself make any report ; that he should in no case have more than one vote ; and that if on a division the members should be equal, a member of the regency should be called in to give the casting vote ; and that when he attended on the council of regency to report on the business of his department, he should always be accompanied by one of the members of his own council who had differed in opinion from him, selected by the whole number of those who had so differed. Nothing can be more ingenious ; but the ingenuity is that of a man who teaches his horse to live on a straw a-day. By the time that the chief has submitted to all these diminutions of his power, he has ceased to be chief, and has become far the most humble and insignificant member of the body.

We can easily estimate the political sagacity of a man who gravely recommends a national bankruptcy. St. Simon represents it as the preferable choice in a terrible alternative. Either way a gross injustice must be committed : if the nation did pay the debt, then this was an injustice to the nation, because a set of usurious extortionate capitalists were the principal creditors ; if it repudiated, then it certainly committed a sort of injustice towards those from whom it had borrowed. But the latter was much the lesser injustice of the two, because the rich creditors, being vile creditors, had better be plundered than not, and the poor creditors would soon have their loss made up to them by the remission of taxes. Having made up his mind to this extensive measure, St. Simon proceeds to find a theory to justify it ; and he finds it in a new account of the nature of a monarchy. The monarchy, he says, is not elective, nor is it hereditary. It is a trust : a king of France derives nothing from his predecessors, not even from his fathers. Consequently every engagement made by a predecessor terminates with that predecessor's life ; and " our kings pay for their great power during their life by their utter powerlessness after their death." Establish this principle, and apply it firmly, and we get two advantages of the utmost importance : in the first place, kings will not be able to rush into such foolish wars as ruined the kingdom under Louis XIV., nor to erect useless palaces at pleasure ; secondly, we get rid of the pestilent race of tax-farmers and tax-collectors. If we calmly balance the gain and loss, he adds, we cannot doubt that a bankruptcy, however painful for the moment, would be far the wisest course. France is, he says, in the position of a man who has to choose between enduring the slow torture of a diseased limb year by year, and having the limb cut off by an operation that, at the cost of a moment's suffering, will restore him to perfect health. It would perhaps be more accurate to say, that the more analogous case would be presented by a man who had the choice between enduring long torture and cutting another man's leg off. The people who were to repudiate were not the same people who had lent the money. But St. Simon does not stop at trifles of this sort ; he rather devotes himself to considering the best way in which the bankruptcy could be announced ; and he decides that a really well-written edict, logically based on the principle of the monarchy, and couched in peremptory and unhesitating terms,—would disarm opposition. He gets quite enthusiastic in describing the effects of this edict ; and works himself up, until at last he observes, that, as to the misery a bankruptcy might be supposed to cause, he can only say that the more were the complaints, lamentations, and the greater

the despair caused by the ruin of so many individuals and families, why, the more careful every one would be for the future.

The Duke of Orleans wished this enterprising and bold financier himself to preside over the department which was to be the theatre of this grand project. But St. Simon resolutely refused, and certainly for an excellent reason. "I answered," he tells us, "that I had no aptitude for finance; that it was a mass of details which somehow or other had got worked into a mystical science; that as to commerce, money, exchanges, circulation, and all the matters belonging to financial administration, I knew them only by name; that I did not know the first rules of arithmetic; that I had never interfered with the management of my own property, or of my household expenses, because I felt myself incapable of doing so." The duke was not, however, quite repulsed even by so very good an argument; he still pressed the point, and dwelt on the instruction and comfort to be derived from the subordinate members of the department. But St. Simon was too prudent and too honest, and he successfully persisted in declining. His honesty, which in a person of the present day would be rather insignificant, deserved commendation in an age, when the man who had the task of appointing to the highest offices expressly declared that he considered utter inaptitude in the official no bar to an appointment. But whether there was much moral superiority displayed by St. Simon or not, what a flood of light the confession of his financial ignorance throws upon his character! We know at once the class of politicians among whom we ought to place him. It is a class that abounds in modern England. Who does not know more than one enthusiast with an infallible plan for paying off the national debt? He can show you how to persuade the national creditor to take very short terminable annuities; he makes it clear that the annuities can be paid with an unlimited paper currency; he speaks of millions as if they were halfpence; but he could not add up his butcher's bill to save his life.

St. Simon recommended the convocation of the states-general as a pure stroke of stratagem. He did not believe that the states-general had the slightest right to meet, or the slightest power to do any thing after they had met. But, he said, there are many people who have a vague notion that the states-general are a wonderfully grand affair. Let us summon them; they will be so obliged to the Duke of Orleans for summoning them together, that they will do any thing he asks them. They will be the exact body to proclaim a general bankruptcy; for they mostly come from the provinces, while the state-creditors are Paris capitalists; and there is nothing which poor

provincials would enjoy more than getting rid of taxes at the expense of the rich metropolitan speculators. The prospect of their personal gain will "make them see a new heaven and a new earth in a bankruptcy, and will make it impossible for them to hesitate between their own happiness and the misery of the creditors." Then, again, the regent will be easily able to induce them to take measures for removing the bastards of Louis XIV. from the place in the succession to the crown. The states-general must present a petition to the young king, setting forth the great scandal and danger of its being treated as even possible that the offspring of a double adultery should sit on the throne of France. In fact, St. Simon recognises only two difficulties: first, in what terms the petition should be drawn up; and secondly, how the states-general should be dismissed when they had done their work. It will be quite necessary, he says, to have the petition all ready before they meet, or they will go on talking for ever, and doing nothing. They must be led gently till they are in a fit state to have this petition suggested to them, and then they will gladly accept it. St. Simon accordingly draws up the heads of the petition; and a very pretty document it would doubtless have been, and very instructive to the king, if there had ever been any states-general to present it. But then, if the states-general are suffered to pronounce a decision that the bastards are to be excluded, how is it to be managed that they shall not acquire a sort of precedent for the exercise of real power? St. Simon replies, that it of course required some skill and tact in the management; but that it might be arranged that they should only go so far as to proclaim *per verba et voces*, by a sort of general cheer and applause, a wish that the Duke of Orleans should have his legitimate place in the succession. The regent should then interfere, and say that he asked for nothing more than their love and goodwill; and that with so young a prince on the throne it would be indelicate to be very explicit in talking about a succession. The states-general would see this, and would rest content with their simple "acclamation" in favour of the regent; which, while it would enlist and determine popular sympathy in his favour, would give them no kind of pretence of power as a political body. Thus all would be quietly and satisfactorily arranged. As usual, when St. Simon has set his hobby going, he makes it go well. He can foresee all that is to happen; and it is only on the smallest points that he will admit even a possibility of difficulties arising. Directly he has made up his mind to have a hare cooked, it never occurs to him for a moment that there may be a difficulty in catching it; the only puzzle is, whether to have it cold or hashed the second day.

The death of Louis XIV. brought the time when all these schemes of government were to be realised; but the regent found himself far too much hampered by the difficulties of his position, at first a very precarious one, to take any very bold measures. We hear nothing of the national bankruptcy or the convocation of the states-general; they were not projects very well suited to an indolent man newly burdened with the pressure of real responsibility. The scheme of managing the different departments of state by councils was tried, and utterly failed. The members could not be got to work together; they knew nothing of business; they consumed their time in foolish quarrels. St. Simon cannot help acknowledging the want of success; but he attributes it to the weakness and misconduct of individuals. Partly it was the turn of his own mind to see the matter from this point of view; his observations of the persons with whom he was brought into contact was so close, keen, and penetrating, that he came to believe that such an observation would give the key to every question of state; and partly also it is a general weakness of all political theorists to attribute the break-down of their schemes to the fault of the agents who are charged with carrying them out. They can never admit, or even comprehend, that the error lies in the schemes themselves. St. Simon lays the principal blame on the regent himself, whose character he paints with all his admirable touches of truth and life. After speaking in the highest terms of the powers of the duke's mind, and of the native qualities of his heart, he goes on to lament his fatal "facility, or, to use the real word, weakness,"—his timidity, which led him to fear his enemies so much as to treat them with more distinction than his friends; his habit of constant suspicion; and his disbelief in the virtues either of man or woman. The duke was really attached to St. Simon, and always treated him with every mark of respect, and with as near an approach to affection as it was in his nature to display. But St. Simon had no real power under the regency. He was too much the friend of the regent to have any. He never intimidated the regent; he could give him little assistance in unravelling the entanglements of all the intrigues formed against his authority. The regent respected him, but could not use him; and therefore the eight years of the regency went by without St. Simon having any thing more than a nominal influence over the mind of the ruler who had found in him the truest of friends and the most faithful of counsellors.

St. Simon could do nothing to diminish the complete subjugation in which the Abbé Dubois, the most contemptible and vile of men, held the mind of the regent. The regent consulted

St. Simon, and heard his opinion : he would listen patiently for a couple of hours while St. Simon ransacked history to furnish precedents illustrative of the dangers of trusting such a man as Dubois ; he disburdened his mind to his old friend, and complained of Dubois more bitterly than ever St. Simon himself thought it right to do ; but in the end he acted as Dubois wished. Short, however, of giving him real power, the regent wished to bestow on St. Simon every thing. He even offered to make him chancellor. St. Simon tells us, that he laughed aloud when this extraordinary offer was made him ; he told the regent that he knew nothing whatever about law, and was utterly unsuited for holding a magisterial dignity. The regent replied, that nothing could be simpler or easier ; that the duties of a chancellor might be learnt in an hour, and that they really consisted in the mere holding the seals. It was with the greatest difficulty that St. Simon could make the regent acquiesce in his opinion, that an old nobleman and soldier would be simply ridiculous if he appeared as chancellor. Some time afterwards the regent offered to make St. Simon the king's governor, in place of Marshal de Villeroy. St. Simon refused this honour no less resolutely than the other. He insisted that De Villeroy had given no cause for his removal, and that he ought not to be displaced. He also urged a very curious objection,—that as he was known to have stood forward as the friend and supporter of the regent at the time when the regent was suspected of poisoning the presumptive heir of the crown, he would be exposed to the most injurious calumnies if any thing should happen to the king while under his charge.

The only distinguished public service on which he was employed was that of special ambassador to Spain, in order to sign the contracts for the marriage of the Infanta with Louis XV., and of the daughter of the regent with the Prince of the Asturias. St. Simon was delighted with Spain, more especially because he there received the honour of being, together with his second son, made a grandee of the first class. But he had no real share in the management of the relations between France and Spain. This appears most conspicuously in the matter of the king's confessor. D'Aubenton, the confessor of the King of Spain, was anxious that a Jesuit should be made confessor of Louis XV., instead of the Abbé Fleury. He sounded St. Simon on the subject ; who describes how the wily Jesuit began his conversation by mentioning the high terms in which the Jesuits of the French court always spoke of him ; and finding his auditor apparently pleased, " he gave him a glance of the utmost sweetness (*il se mit à me faire véritablement les yeux doux*) ; and after a little stammering and hesitation, at last

gave birth, without any aid from St. Simon (*il accoucha sans aucun secours de moi*), to the proposal, that the confessor of Louis XV. should be changed." St. Simon continues, "I paid him in the same money he had given me about my kindness to the Jesuits; but I told him that it would give as great offence in France that arrangements should be made in Spain for changing the French monarch's confessor, as it would to Spain if a similar arrangement regarding the Spanish king had been made at Paris." St. Simon thought that he had thus put a stop to the plan, and frustrated the efforts of D'Aubenton. But, as is now well known, D'Aubenton had already obtained from Dubois an undertaking that the change should be made; and it shortly afterwards was made, and a Jesuit confessor was appointed in the place of Fleury. We cannot say that St. Simon was exactly outwitted; for he saw through the design of D'Aubenton, and his importance was rated at least high enough for the Jesuit to wish to gain him; but the real current of affairs ran on without his having any share in directing it. While he was delighting in all the ceremonies and splendours of the court of Madrid, Dubois was at the regent's side, ordering every thing at his pleasure.

St. Simon lavishes all his wealth of contumelious epithets and expressions in describing the character and career of the infamous favourite of the regent. He had every reason for hating the Abbé Dubois. He was the last champion of government by an aristocracy; Dubois was sprung from the dregs of the people, and rose from being valet to the regent's tutor to being absolute master of the regent and of France. He was the old and faithful friend of the Duke of Orleans; Dubois supplanted him so entirely, that, finding his utter powerlessness with the regent, he retired to La Ferté until Dubois died. He was a pious, honourable, punctilious nobleman; Dubois was not only the basest of intriguers, but the foulest and coarsest blackguard that ever carried the slang of the gutters into the precincts of a palace. St. Simon has thought over the villany of Dubois so much and so long, that he speaks of it with more labour of antithesis and epigram than is generally to be found in his apparently artless sketches. "Avarice," he says, "debauchery, and ambition were his gods; perfidy, flattery, and servility were his means; perfect impiety was his relaxation; the opinion that uprightness and honesty are chimeras, used merely as ornaments, and never to be found in the heart, was his guiding principle." St. Simon collects anecdote after anecdote to illustrate his unparalleled brutality and profanity. He tells us how Dubois, on the first Easter after he was made cardinal, woke at eight o'clock, and then, ringing furiously for



his servants, cursed them horribly, and poured out against them a thousand reproaches in the most filthy and insulting terms, because they had not awakened him in time to say mass: how the governess of the regent's daughters was persuaded that she ought to pay the all-powerful cardinal a visit of congratulation; and how that dignitary of the church, thinking she was come to ask a favour of him, broke out with, "By all the devils, it can't be done;" and on the lady trying to explain, fairly pushed her out of the room, shouting out, "Go to all the devils, and leave me at peace:" and lastly, how he died grinding his teeth with rage at the surgeons who could not prolong his life. We cannot but sympathise with all the warmth which animates St. Simon in speaking of this wretch; and the efforts St. Simon made to counteract and withstand the growing influence of Dubois in the first year of the regency are very much to his credit. When he found himself beaten, he even entered into a sort of arrangement with Dubois; with the object, apparently, of securing access to the regent, which Dubois, if directly and openly opposed, might have denied him. He did not scruple to use intrigue against an intriguer; and he has left us an amusing account of his conduct, when solicited through Bellisle to procure from the regent the appointment of Dubois as first minister. He gives us at full length all the arguments he used to convince the regent of the extreme impolicy of making any one first minister, much more of making Dubois first minister; and then tells us, with a sort of grave humour, how he came out after the interview with the regent into the antechamber, where Bellisle was waiting, and informed him that "things were going on capitally, and the appointment would be announced immediately." We must, however, confess, that we think that he rates the ability of Dubois too low, and especially with reference to the double marriage between the royal families of Spain and France. St. Simon tells us, that the effecting this stroke of policy as the conclusion of a war had been reckoned a great triumph for Dubois; but that in reality the King of Spain was very anxious not to separate himself from his relations in France, and the thoughts of the Queen of Spain were entirely directed to Italy, so that Dubois found every thing ready to his hand when he made the proposal. This is not quite a fair way of estimating the merit of such a stroke of statesmanship. The whole merit consists in penetrating into the real motives of others through the veil of their assumed and apparent interests. Dubois calculated that the King and Queen of Spain really wished for peace, and he was right; and no one but a clever man could have made the calculation.

St. Simon was also on his guard against another adventurer of the time of the regency,—Law, the famous author of the Mississippi scheme. Nothing could be more creditable to St. Simon, or more indicative of his honesty and good sense, than his conduct under the temptation which Law's temporary success threw in his way. At first he wished to have nothing to do with Law, and refused even to see him. But the regent requested that he would give Law an opportunity of conversing freely with him; and accordingly Law used to visit St. Simon every Tuesday; and this continued until Law's downfall. He tried to explain his scheme to St. Simon, and to convince him of its expediency; but St. Simon insisted on his own utter incapacity for finance as a sufficient reason why he should not pretend to go into so difficult a matter. However, Law thought it worth his while still to visit and converse with a man who was so confidential a friend of the regent. When the Mississippi fever was at its height, and every one was besieging Law for shares, he offered both St. Simon and Madame St. Simon any amount without payment, and without their having any responsibility or trouble; but they both firmly declined. Shortly after the refusal, the regent had a conversation at St. Cloud with St. Simon, and pressed him not to refuse Law's offer, saying that all was done in the king's name, and that therefore St. Simon was really refusing the king's bounty, not Law's. But St. Simon was firm; and on the regent asking his reason, said, that since Midas in the fable, he had never read of or seen any one who had the power of turning every thing he touched into gold; that he did not think that Law had the power; and that he believed that all Law's science was a new kind of conjuring, which put Peter's money in Jack's pocket, and only enriched the one because it despoiled the other: that sooner or later the delusion would be discovered; and then great misery would follow, while those who repented of having profited by this misery would not be able to discover to whom they ought to make restitution. This reasoning, obvious as it appears to us, must have needed much shrewdness in a French nobleman of that date, and to refuse so advantageous an offer demanded still more honesty than shrewdness; for a man in St. Simon's position, having the earliest intelligence of every fluctuation in the market, might have secured his own fortune, however clearly he had foreseen that the bubble must one day burst. St. Simon also displayed great sagacity in his criticisms on the establishment of Law's bank. He said, that the establishment of a paper currency so complete that all metallic currency should be entirely withdrawn, was contrary to the experience of all ages, since Abraham bought a sepulchre for

Sarah with silver ; that he acknowledged that a national bank, with the issue of a limited paper currency, was a great gain to a country ; but that the experiment could be successful only in a republic, or under a constitutional monarchy like that of England ; for that under a despotism like that of France the bank would always be liable to be plundered by a royal mistress or favourite, and therefore would enjoy no stability of credit. We cannot deny that St. Simon's remarks are very just ; but as a matter of fact, Law's scheme effected what his own pet scheme of a national bankruptcy was intended to effect. The debt left by Louis XIV. was in a great measure paid off by the valueless billets which Law furnished to the government ; and the present misery inflicted by Law was probably not very much greater than St. Simon was prepared to inflict himself.

Many and bitter as were the disappointments which the regency brought to St. Simon, it also brought him one hour of exquisite triumph. The day came when the first wish of his heart was gratified, and the bastards were reduced to the rank of simple peers. In the first year of his government, the Duke of Orleans, satisfied with having seen the will and codicil of Louis XIV. set aside by an obedient parliament, came to a sort of compromise with the Duke of Maine, and permitted him to continue his office of personal guardian of the young king, and to enjoy a rank above the peers and immediately inferior to that of the princes of the blood. St. Simon was deeply mortified at this : the very point which it had once seemed to him so monstrous in Louis XIV. to concede, was now conceded by St. Simon's intimate friend the Duke of Orleans ; however, a good day was coming. The Duke and Duchess of Maine entered into intrigues with the leaders of the parliament ; and the regent determined on a bold and final measure. He was stimulated to venture on it by the Prince of Condé, who was desirous of obtaining the post of confidence about the king's person held by the Duke of Maine. He had sounded St. Simon on the subject ; but to his great surprise, found St. Simon little disposed to second him, and full of the difficulty and dishonesty of upsetting the king's will in this respect ; until Condé hinted that, if this change was effected, another would accompany it, and that the bastards would at the same time be reduced to the rank of peers. Immediately St. Simon changed, and found no longer either danger or dishonesty in setting aside the whole of the late king's dispositions in favour of the Duke of Maine. The parliament was summoned to the "bed of justice" at the Tuileries. St. Simon cannot contain his transports of joy ; he hangs over the minutest details of this glorious event. He carefully records that

his triumph was accomplished on Friday morning, the 20th of August 1718. He draws a plan of the chamber in which the sitting was held, and shows exactly how those present were arranged. He lingers over every preparatory step; until at last he brings us to the great announcement, made by the chancellor, that the bastards were reduced to their proper rank. He describes how every word was eagerly caught up by the ears of the listeners; but no one felt the same deep intense joy that he did. "I was," he says, "dying of joy; and thought I should have fainted; my heart, dilated in excess, could find no further room to swell. The violence I had to exert to prevent my feelings displaying themselves was infinite; but still this torment was delicious. I reckoned up the years of servitude, the mournful days in which, dragged as a victim to the parliament, I had served so often to the bastards as a cause of self-gratulation. I went over the different steps by which they had risen above the rest of the peers; I tried to estimate the depth of their fall. I knew I owed all the triumph to myself, and thanked myself for being the cause of all that was being done. I considered the glorious splendour of all this happening in presence of the king and of so august an assembly, and triumphed and was avenged. I revelled in my vengeance; still I did not fail to listen to the reading of the sentence, every word of which sounded on my heart like the bow on an instrument, or to examine the different impressions it was making on each of those around me." If it were not for a few such moments of keen enjoyment, human nature would perhaps be too weak to go through the harassing combats of public life. At any rate, we seem to know St. Simon much better than before when we have read this frank confession of what passed in his heart; nor can we fail to remark how native and unfailing must have been his love of observing and dissecting the thoughts of other men, when he could manage to indulge it even in a moment of such absorbing and acute feeling.

In the last years of the fatal administration of Dubois, St. Simon had the mortification of seeing the step undone, and the bastards restored to their place above the peerage. He had also the mortification, almost equally deep, of seeing the bull *Unigenitus* registered by the parliament, and made a part of the law of France; an object at which Louis XIV. had aimed in vain, even in the plenitude of his power, but which was now effected without opposition at the bidding of an ecclesiastic who had purchased a cardinal's hat with money received by him as a bribe from a foreign power, and who waited till he had attained the rank of archbishop, to avow his mistress openly. St. Simon retired to the seclusion of his country-seat,

and made no attempt to interfere with matters of state. At last the death of Dubois recalled him to the side of the Duke of Orleans ; but he had hardly resumed his old post of confidential adviser of the regent, when that prince died, in December 1723. At this point St. Simon brings his memoirs to a conclusion. He wisely determined that they should end at some particular period ; and not continue to a wearisome length, protracted by the garrulity of old age, after the writer had relinquished that personal familiarity with the great world which is the foundation of their excellence. Having, shortly after the death of the regent, received a hint from Fleury that his attendance at Versailles would not in future be wished for, he withdrew to his country-seat ; and spent the remainder of his long life in shaping, correcting, and polishing his memoirs. He died in 1755, at the age of eighty.

At the conclusion of his memoirs, St. Simon addresses his readers, and claims for what he has written the merit of truth. It was the love of truth, he says, that had injured his worldly prospects. He asks that his readers should, as a recompense to him for his disinterested conduct, put a generous confidence in what he has written. As for impartiality, he makes no pretensions to what he considers an impossibility, as it was not in his nature to hate or to love slightly. All that he wishes us to believe is, that in stating his aversions he has not stated them unfairly ; that he has not consciously made bad worse in order to add to the effect of his descriptions. Most readers in these days will, we think, be inclined to give St. Simon credit for the virtue he claims. The general impression left by the memoirs is certainly not that their author was a malevolent man. On the contrary, the more we read of them, and the more we enter into the whole character of the writer, the higher is our opinion of him, not only as a man of genius, but as a man of sense and honour.

Undoubtedly it is impossible that in a gallery of so many hundred portraits all should be likenesses. St. Simon must often have done injustice,—have seen qualities distorted,—have estimated motives inaccurately,—have been the victim of his own great powers of observation and delineation. The editors of a recent edition of *The Memoirs of the Marquis of Dangeau*, the court-loving contemporary of St. Simon, invite attention to the dull pages of that panegyrist, as a means of correcting many false conceptions to which the *Memoirs of St. Simon* would be likely to give birth, and of thus doing justice to all whom St. Simon maligned. St. Simon is not to be set right in this way. He is so incomparably the ablest, shrewdest, acutest writer of his time ; his point of judgment is so much the most right ; his

position as an observer so much the most favourable,—that he will always stand alone. It is at once the prerogative, and the greatest responsibility, of genius, that the stamp which it places on men and things is almost ineradicable. To the end of time men will think of those whom St. Simon painted in the light in which he regarded them. The only really available means of aiding our judgment when we come to examine these successive portraits is, to keep before our minds all that we know of the author. We cannot tell how much or how little epithets laudatory or depreciatory are deserved when bestowed by him on individuals not known to us otherwise, or known to us only through persons far less fit to judge than St. Simon. But we can gain a general notion of what St. Simon was; and that will, on the whole, enable us with tolerable success to measure the probable degree of his approach to the real truth.

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ART. VIII.—THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE ENGLISH  
MINISTRY.

*Correspondence relating to the Affairs of Naples.* Parl. Paper. 1857.  
*Papers relating to the Proceedings at Canton.* Parl. Paper. 1857.

WE are not Ministerial partisans. We are not members of "Her Majesty's Opposition." We feel as little inclination to blame every thing that has been done, as to find fault with whatever it is suggested might have been done instead. We can no more follow the Government in all their proceedings than the Tories in all their criticisms. Neither party shall drag us through their mire. We think Ministers very open to attack for certain actions and omissions. But if any thing could induce us to give them plenary absolution and a general letter of license, it would be the reckless and unprincipled manner in which they are assailed by their professional antagonists on every occasion, and for every thing they do or leave undone. If any thing could transform us from our proper character as public watchmen and censors into thick-and-thin supporters of the powers that be, it would be the indiscriminate and perpetual warfare carried on against them by the powers that wish to be—but are not. It is difficult to watch the conduct and language of the Opposition without coming to the conclusion, that their censures are suggested less by their opinions than by their position; that, had they been in the place of

Ministers, they would have acted as Ministers have done; and that, had Ministers taken the precise course now recommended by the Opposition, they would have been assailed by the Opposition for having done so. All this does great harm: it makes the country sick and weary of ordinary parliamentary encounters; it saves Ministers from blame and punishment where they really deserve it; and induces thoughtful people to retain and forgive them, from the consideration what manner of men are those who are their antagonists, and would therefore, in case of a defeat, be their successors.

We fully believe the members of the actual Government to be in the main honourable and just men; aiming at nothing but what they deem right and fair; earnestly desirous to promote the welfare and credit of their country, and anxious that other nations should be prosperous and happy likewise; but not very hopeful of human progress, and greatly disposed to mistrust popular action in every country but their own. The faults we find with them in relation to foreign politics their opponents share in a far more liberal measure: these are, the want of a clear and settled principle of action; want of adequate power to carry out their views; and want of care, and, if not of conscience, at least of a sufficiently solemn sense of responsibility, in their diplomatic appointments. The first is an intellectual defect; the last a moral delinquency; the other is a misfortune, for which partly their own want of resolution, partly the unscrupulous tactics of their rivals, and principally a general dereliction of duty on the part of the constituencies, are to blame.

It is the fashion, we know, with a large number of politicians, both in and out of parliament, to contrast Lord Palmerston's foreign policy unfavourably with that of his quondam rival and recent colleague, Lord Aberdeen, in a manner and to a degree scarcely warranted by what we know of the actual results of each. Lord Palmerston is one of those men, to be found in all walks of life, who, for some reason or other, enjoy a reputation which is by no means borne out by the facts of their career, so far at least as those facts are patent to the world. He is very generally regarded on the Continent, and very generally represented here, as one of the most uncomfortable and dangerous foreign ministers this country ever possessed—litigious, pertinacious, aggressive, and imperious; always inclined to assert the pretensions of Great Britain too haughtily, and to push them too far; quick in resentment, prompt in interference, and extreme in his demands; luxuriating in hot-water; revelling in angry protocols; and always on the verge of a quarrel with one neighbour or another.

Yet look at the facts of the last quarter of a century, during far the greater portion of which Lord Palmerston held the seals of the Foreign Office. He took the direction of our international relations at an epoch of singular difficulty and peril, when one of the principal nations of Europe, our nearest neighbour, had just discarded its ancient dynasty by a popular revolution; when other Continental countries were agitated by corresponding movements, and a general ferment prevailed which menaced spreading convulsions and contingent wars; and when the forcible severance of Belgium and Holland presented a problem for the great powers which few believed could be solved without a war. Since that time he has had to deal with many delicate and dangerous questions of diplomacy and statesmanship, to tide over many crises of no ordinary gloom, to soothe many wounded susceptibilities, to stand firm against many unreasonable demands, to defeat many unwarrantable intrigues. Questions of American boundaries and American ambitions; questions of Russian designs on Turkey, and French hankerings after Egypt; questions of great perplexity between Austria and Italy, as between France and Switzerland,—have threatened disturbance to the harmony of the world. A third revolution, a sanguinary civil strife, and a daring *coup-d'état*, have intervened in France, and rendered our relations with that country such as required both strong clear views, and great suavity and steadiness in pursuing them, to maintain in a satisfactory condition; while nearly the whole of Europe was subjected to a series of political convulsions, which overthrew ministers, dynasties, thrones, and constitutions, like houses of cards, and called for the exercise of a degree of sagacity and firmness in the foreign minister of England which more ordinary times neither need nor test. Yet during the whole of that trying time England enjoyed unbroken peace at home, and the often imminent peril of a European war was as often successfully averted. By one means or another, thanks to singular good fortune, or to skill yet more singular, the critical and menacing conjunctures of 1831, 1840, 1848, and 1852, passed over without rupture and without hostilities, so far at least as we were concerned. But no sooner had Lord Palmerston resigned the Foreign Office to a minister whose prudence, conciliatory demeanour, and genial disposition, had always been the theme of general praise, than a war of most formidable character broke out, and threatened to last for years and to involve all Europe in its vortex. The "peace minister" *par excellence* found himself under the hard necessity of declaring war. The minister whom it was the fashion to represent as perpetually occupied in bringing us to



the verge of war had the happiness to terminate hostilities by a successful and honourable peace in little more than a year after his elevation to the premiership.

Now we are far from meaning to infer from this that Lord Aberdeen is pre-eminently bellicose, or Lord Palmerston pre-eminently pacific; but certainly the facts we have recalled should induce those who preach the opposite doctrine to pause a little in their inconsiderate accusations. The truth, no doubt, is, that both statesmen are equally resolute to uphold the honour and defend the interests of Great Britain, and equally desirous, while doing so, to preserve peace and friendly relations with all other powers. But to a certain extent they differ in the means by which they would attain, and in the temper in which they pursue, their end. Vigilance and firmness may predominate in the character of one minister, mildness and conciliation in that of the other; one set of qualities will at times be more suitable and successful than the other, according to the nature of the conjuncture and the disposition of the adversary to be dealt with. Occasionally yieldingness may be needed, occasionally pertinacity; and it may happen that the respective qualities are in some crises unfortunately misplaced. The character and habitual mode of action of Lord Palmerston may arouse combativeness and irritation; they may also protect weakness and prevent encroachment,—and no doubt they often have done so,—by warning off the ill-disposed in time. The character and mode of action of Lord Aberdeen may by possibility tempt aggression, and invite grasping or vulgar adversaries to put forth inadmissible demands; they may, on the other hand, allay suspicion, soothe jealousy, and awake a corresponding spirit of accommodation in generous opponents. The treatment which would succeed with one antagonist, would be out of place in dealing with a man of different mood; and tact to discern when to be yielding and when to be stiff is peculiarly needed in a foreign minister. Now not only is it very possible that Lord Palmerston's real disposition may be earnestly and sincerely pacific, but it is by no means improbable that his prompt and vigilant antagonism may be a fairer security for peace than more yielding and forbearing tendencies. Unhappily the world is full of what we may call *tentative aggressors*,—the selfish, the vulgar, the violent, the covetous,—men who desire what is not their own because it would suit them, and who are skilful in blinding themselves to the immorality of such desires; and these parties are always trying how far they may presume on the forbearance of the quiet and the powerful, and impose a restless and uneasy life on all neighbours who they fancy may

prefer peace to the trouble of resistance, and the dangerous repose of slumber to the harass of incessant vigilance. In presence of such, it may well chance that a policy and temper which yield little, and pass over nothing, may be at once the wisest and the most secure, and in the end the least troublesome. Men and states get tired of attempting what they know will not be permitted, and of cherishing secret designs which experience has shown them are sure to be detected and exposed. Little difficulties, too, are not allowed to grow into great ones: the misunderstanding is settled before it has expanded into a quarrel; the pilfering propensity is checked before it has enlarged into an actual seizure or an absolute demand; encroachment is warned back before it has proceeded so far that retrogression would be attended with humiliation and disgrace. Those who know the secret history of the last four years, are understood to believe, that if Lord Palmerston's counsel of prompt and peremptory measures had been taken early in 1853, at the first step of Russian aggression, that power would have drawn back in time, and the war which has cost so much and injured so many would have been averted. We are not, therefore, disposed to condemn the spirit which presides over Lord Palmerston's foreign policy, though it may sometimes be manifested too suddenly or be pushed too far.

Of the policy of the war with Russia, and of the spirit in which, on the whole, that war was conducted, we have on more than one occasion expressed our warm approval. At first, indeed, there were divided councils, and the trumpet gave forth an uncertain sound. But when the discordant elements had seceded from the Cabinet, and still more when the resolute and earnest spirit of the nation had spoken out in tones which admitted of no misapprehension, the war was prosecuted in a manner which, as far at least as energy and stubborn determination were concerned, left nothing to be desired. Wavering and weary allies were kept firm to their engagements in spite of exhaustion and misgivings. Unskilful and timid negotiators were rebuked or disavowed. It is no secret now, that it was owing simply and solely to the steady perseverance of the British people and the British Government, that we owed the final triumph of the war, and the satisfactory and honourable conditions of the peace. If the most eloquent and influential statesman out of office here had been listened to, Sebastopol never would have been taken, and the Danube and the Black Sea never would have been wrested from the grasp of Russia. If our Ministers had not displayed the utmost firmness and cheerfulness in upholding the flagging spirits of our ally, whose finances were exhausted and who was discouraged at the long delay of the expected victory,

peace would have been concluded on terms which would have left the original objects of the war wholly unaccomplished. It will be known some day—it is known in a few quarters now—how great were the difficulties our Ministers had to encounter, in order to prevent all our efforts and sacrifices from being rendered unavailing by a want of pertinacity at last, and with what patience and steadiness they met and overcame those difficulties. And after all was over, and the peace of Paris had given us what we had fought for, Russian intrigue would have undone half our work, had not Lord Palmerston and Lord Clarendon displayed an unrelaxing vigilance, and an unbending will, which were strangely misconstrued here—but nowhere else. Our English newspapers, with scarcely an exception, were curiously in the dark with regard to the real facts of this last act in the drama. They abused Lord Palmerston for so resolutely opposing the reopening of the Paris Conference; and then for finally—and, as they fancied, weakly and inconsistently—permitting them to take place. The Continental politicians better comprehended the truth and meaning of these circumstances; and while writers on this side of the water were talking of Lord Palmerston's defeat, the Paris scribes were furious at Lord Palmerston's victory;—and a real and most momentous victory it was. The British Government refused to consent to the renewal of the conferences till it was agreed that the terms of the peace should not be altered or reconsidered; till, in fact, it had been arranged that the negotiators should meet only to embody in a formal document the understandings previously arrived at. Ministers were determined that the new Bessarabian frontier should effect, as originally decided, the entire removal of Russia from the Danube; and would listen to no proposals for the second meeting of the contracting powers till this point was conceded, and the Russian quibble effectually quashed. Their firmness prevailed: the Emperor of the French was at last satisfied of the wisdom and justice of our pertinacity, and virtually supported our demands. The peculiar mode in which the arrangement was finally brought about cannot, of course, yet be disclosed; but the facts are as we have stated. The conference-ambassadors only reassembled to give a diplomatic and binding shape to the terms already adjusted between France, Sardinia, and ourselves. They met, not to discuss, but to enact.

The next point to be touched upon is the American dispute. While the terms of peace, and even the issue of the war with Russia, yet trembled in the balance, the government of the United States, for purposes best known to themselves, thought the

moment opportune for getting up two very pretty diplomatic quarrels with a friendly power which seemed at the time to have its hands full. We are not about now to weary our readers with any disquisitions on either the "Enlistment Question" or the "Central American Question:" we discussed both fully at the time. We did not then, and we do not now, entertain the slightest doubt, that—bating the original error of endeavouring to obtain recruits in a state which we were foolish enough to believe well-disposed towards us—in both matters Great Britain was altogether right, and the United States altogether wrong. We question whether any thing more discourteous, more ungenerous, and more unfair, than the conduct of the American government was ever recorded in diplomatic history. We notice it here only for the sake of explaining the conduct of the British Ministers in that last act of the drama which has been so much and so falsely perverted to their discredit,—we mean their submission to the insult implied in the dismissal of Mr. Crampton, without retaliating by the dismissal of Mr. Dallas. There is no doubt that the government at Washington, in the plenitude of their insolence and unfriendliness, offered us a deliberate affront; and that Great Britain—Lord Palmerston being her minister—pocketed that affront. But let us see what were the true circumstances of the case; and then decide whether they reflected discredit upon Lord Palmerston, or upon some other parties.

We thought at the time, and we think still, that the proper course for this country to have pursued on that occasion was, to have requested Mr. Dallas to retire; and to have ceased for the moment all diplomatic relations with a government which had manifested such a captious and unfriendly temper, and which was obviously making use of the dispute with England for electioneering purposes of their own. It was possible enough that Mr. Crampton had been injudicious in his conduct, and unguarded in his language. It was possible also that, by representing the proceedings of the American democratic politicians, we might be aiding them to play their sinister internal game. Still, from the outset of the difference there had been such barefaced and hostile endeavours to entrap us into a false position, and such an obvious determination to fasten a quarrel upon us if they could, or, failing that, to insult us to the utmost limits of possible forbearance; the language, not only of their press, but of their high officials,—of their president and their attorney-general,—had been so rude, un-European, and ungentlemanly; and the instructions forwarded to Mr. Dallas for the arrangement of the Central American dispute, while ostensibly and avowedly earnest and pacific, appeared on closer examination so

unpromising and insincere,—that our quiet acquiescence in the insult, by our retention of the American envoy, could scarcely be regarded in any other light than as a derogation from our high character and usual bearing. But to whom was this unseemly forbearance to be attributed? Not assuredly to Lord Palmerston's government; but to his regular antagonists, and to a certain class of timid, selfish, and seceding supporters. It was clear what the course of THE COUNTRY ought to have been; it was by no means clear what the course of the GOVERNMENT ought to be.

A war with America every one felt, and always feels, would be a sad and deplorable catastrophe. Such an evil, such a scandal, was to be avoided as long as possible, and by every honourable means and every permissible forbearance. The men at that time at the head of the United-States government were so reckless, so foolish, and so evil-disposed, that it was believed they would not have shrunk from hurrying on such a result, had our dismissal of Mr. Dallas been taken up by the misled American people—as it might have been—in a perverse and irritable temper. It was obvious, therefore, that a step which might possibly entail such serious consequences must, if taken at all, be taken with the almost universal concurrence of all political parties. It should not be the decision of a bare majority. It should not be the act of one government, which a succeeding government might dissent from and reverse. It should be the deliberate and preponderating, if not the unanimous, expression, of THE COUNTRY'S will and policy. Unless it were so, it would not carry with it to America the moral weight which was desirable, and which alone could render it influential and decisive. Now it was obvious that it could not be this, nor be made to appear this. It was notorious that a considerable portion of the community, though condemning as strongly as we do the behaviour of the Americans, were unwilling to embark in a quarrel of which the first seed was sown by a mistake on our part. It was notorious also, that a certain number of the liberal members who usually supported the Government, but who represented the commercial population of the West of England,—and whose constituencies were in greater alarm for their pockets than their honour,—had intimated to Lord Palmerston that, if he dismissed Mr. Dallas, they must vote against him in the debate which would ensue, and that the consequence would probably be a majority against him and his proceedings. It was known too, that some very respectable and influential politicians, little disposed in general to submit to insult or dictation, were by no means satisfied that our minister at Washington had not given just ground of com-

plaint, and were disinclined to prosecute a dispute where there was any flaw in our claim, or any weak point in our position. Finally, too,—and most unhappily, and to the great discredit of our public men,—it was notorious that there were a few—not much respected, indeed, but still clever, active, and powerful for mischief—who would not have scrupled to embrace and argue in open senate the cause of America, if by so doing they saw a chance of annoying, damaging, or displacing their political antagonists. Under these circumstances, it might naturally be deemed wiser to endure a rude and harsh proceeding, rather than resent it with divided councils in the Parliament and hesitating feelings in the country. It was obvious, that a far greater triumph would have been afforded to the American government, and a far greater injury inflicted upon British prestige, if Ministers had been defeated and turned out of office for daring to resent the offered insult; or even if, with a narrow and ineffective majority as its result, the debate had exhibited the spectacle of one after another of our most noted, if not our most honoured, politicians rising to declare that he thought America in the right, her annoyance warranted, and her insults deserved,—than by simply passing over the affair and proceeding to the previous question. It was desirable that the issue of the whole question should as little as possible be such as to encourage the United States to venture on similar rudenesses in future. But conceive how enormous such encouragement would have been, if a British government had been upset in the endeavour to read a lesson of courtesy and decency to their republican antagonists; and if Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Disraeli, Sir James Graham, Lord John Russell, and Lord Derby, had all declared that the Yankees were perfectly right, and that we had deserved all we got! Would there have been any limit to their arrogance and audacity in future? It was not, therefore, any unworthy love of office that made Lord Palmerston shrink from a defeat in such a cause; but a clear perception of the serious mischief which such defeat would bring upon British interests and British honour. On his unpatriotic rivals and his pusillanimous supporters must lie all the discredit of that barren and unseemly surrender.

Out of the Conferences of Paris, which were held for the pacification of the East, arose a “difference” which for a while threatened the tranquillity of the West. All the powers that met in congress to sign the definitive treaty of peace were naturally, and we believe sincerely, desirous that their work should not be incomplete. They were sick of war: it had proved more bloody, more costly, and less profitable in its results than they had anticipated; and having sheathed the

sword, they wished to guard against the probability of having to draw it again too soon. But there were menacing features in the condition of parts of Italy, which rendered an outbreak of popular fury and vengeance too probable because too just; and it was by no means unlikely, taking into consideration the radically opposite views held by the several European powers on the subject, that such an outbreak would range them on different sides in the conflict, and compromise the peace which had only just been concluded. Count Cavour, too, on behalf of Sardinia, and, as was believed, at the suggestion of Louis Napoleon, brought before the assembled plenipotentiaries the wretched state of the Peninsula, of which his own country formed the one bright spot, and besought his colleagues not to separate till they had made at least an effort to persuade the tyrants of Italy to mitigate their oppressions to a somewhat more decent and endurable degree. And not only were the atrocities pointed at so black as to excite disgust and horror in all just and humane minds, and so dangerous to the tranquillity of that part of Europe as to create rational and unfeigned alarm, but Sardinia had deserved too well of the Allies by her gallant conduct in the war not to have her representations listened to with respect.

It was the conduct of the King of Naples which was especially in question. His despotic brutality had reached that point at which badness merges into, or verges upon, madness. The cruelties practised on the political prisoners in his dungeons; the class of men—his own ministers and the most respectable gentlemen in his dominions—on whom these loathsome barbarities were inflicted; the low and profligate character of the police-agents, to whom he intrusted unlimited power over the lives and liberties of his subjects; and the indiscriminate and all-embracing form which his suspicions seemed to have assumed,—combined to put Ferdinand almost beyond the ordinary pale of royal malefactors. The English were horrified at his illegal and tyrannical treatment of mere honest lovers of freedom; the French were shocked, as all civilised people must be, at transactions so revolting to our age and our quarter of the globe; and even Austria was scandalised at proceedings so calculated to bring arbitrary government into discredit and danger. Dead and dying statesmen and noblemen in chains,—which were not removed even in the hospital; *gentlemen* flogged by special order from the king for no crime but having persuaded their more merciful gaolers to grant them some hours of immunity from the rusty fetters which eat into their flesh; military men of rank and fame, and approved loyalty, torn from home on the unsupported denunciation of any worthless agent

or spy of the police ;—these things, not merely reported in newspapers or private letters, but duly set forth and warranted in official documents and ambassadorial despatches, were surely enough to account for Lord Clarendon's ready accession to Count Cavour's representations and requests for remonstrance, and may be fairly supposed to have weighed even with a despotic emperor like Louis Napoleon. There was warrant enough for intervention : intervention was the natural and almost irresistible impulse of gentle, humane, and Christian men. Assuredly no one who peruses the blue-book whose title we have placed at the head of this article, will be disposed to blame the British Government for remonstrating, or for withdrawing their ambassador when their remonstrances were treated with insolent neglect. If they are to be blamed for any thing, it must be for not having foreseen at the outset that remonstrance would be unavailing unless they were prepared to act,—for not being aware in time that action was almost impossible,—and for not having a clear and defined principle of policy on which they could act. They were earnestly desirous to *persuade* Ferdinand to govern decently ; but they were not determined to *make* him do so, if persuasion had no effect. They disinterestedly desired what was right ; but they shrank from paying the necessary price for its attainment.

If the Western Powers had been *resolute* to compel the King of Naples to cease his revolting barbarities and basenesses, nothing would have been easier. No departure from our avowed policy of non-interference would have been involved. No "intervention" would have been needed : only the distinct proclamation, and the equitable, full carrying out, of the principle of non-intervention,—the clear and peremptory intimation, that between sovereigns and peoples no interference would be practised or permitted ; and that as we, who love liberty, abstain from aiding the popular cause, Austria, who hates liberty, shall equally abstain from aiding the monarchical cause ; that as we deny ourselves the pleasure of active sympathising with the right, our antagonist shall deny herself the pleasure of active sympathising with the wrong. A word would have sufficed. In one quarter of an hour England and France might have done that which would insure the rescue and regeneration of the finest country in Europe,—which would make the heart of every Italian bound within his bosom,—which would open all those prison-doors that for years have closed upon untold horrors,—which would raise from dust, misery, and abject degradation, into comfort, prosperity, and inward peace, the entire Peninsula, from Reggio to the Alps. A brief despatch to Vienna—secret for the present, if you will—would have been



enough—to this effect: “Our policy, present and future, is decided. The chains of Italians shall no longer be riveted by foreign hands. The French *will*, and the Austrians *shall*, evacuate the Papal States by a given date. If the fortification of Placentia be not abandoned, 50,000 French troops shall be concentrated on the Savoyard frontier. If a single Austrian soldier is sent to Naples, one English fleet will appear in that bay, and another in the Adriatic, and before Trieste. A copy of this despatch will be communicated to every Italian sovereign. Now that they know what is before them, join us, if you please, in urging them to do justice, and to give good government and civil rights to their subjects; and there will be no difficulty in the task. If they will not do this, you know as well as we that not one of their thrones is worth a week’s purchase. But you know also, as well as we, that the moment this despatch reaches them, they will all come to us on their bended knees to entreat us to mediate for them with the people whom thenceforth they can neither trample on nor betray.”

But, unhappily, there were two difficulties in the way of adopting this simple course, and holding this intelligible language. The hands of France were not clean, and the vision of England was not clear. At the very moment when our joint remonstrances were presented to King Bomba, the troops of France were occupied at Rome in upholding a government only one degree less barbarous and bad,—and in no degree less unpopular,—than that which was desolating Naples. And Louis Napoleon, while fully alive to the inconsistency and ignominy of his position, dared not withdraw his forces from the Pope’s dominions, because if he did, they would be at once replaced by Austrians; and because, if he forbade that, it was notorious that the throne of Pius, and the life of every priest in Romagna, would be sacrificed to the long-hoarded and righteous vengeance of the people. And England too became aware, though not till after she had spoken, that she dared not do more than speak. She soon discovered that the threatened appearance of her fleet in the Neapolitan waters, following the withdrawal of her ambassador, would almost certainly lead to a general outbreak and a popular revolution;—and her governing classes hold insurrection and revolutionary movements in greater horror even than monarchical oppression. Ferdinand discovered this: his coarse sagacity detected the weak point in the armour both of France and England, and he set both at defiance. Both were baffled: the one from want of virtue, the other from want of faith and courage to run a great risk for the attainment of a great good.

But because our Ministers remonstrated ineffectually, we

do not therefore hold that they were wrong in remonstrating, or in withdrawing their envoy when their representations were repelled with insult. And those who charge Lord Palmerston with inconsistency for his proceedings,—who declare that his protest against the atrocities of Neapolitan rule was in itself a departure from the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of another state,—and that to admonish and remonstrate in the case of a feeble sovereign, while he passes over similar if not equal enormities on the part of the great and powerful, is inequitable and pusillanimous,—lose sight of a distinction which is often forgotten, and which we are glad to seize this opportunity of laying down as broadly as we can. It is this :

The principle of non-intervention in struggles between sovereigns and their subjects, as we have already said, we subscribe to in its entirety, and with the most cordial allegiance. We adopt it *as a whole* : we repudiate its fragmentary, partial, occasional, and one-sided application. We would neither interfere ourselves, nor permit the interference of others. Kings and peoples should be left to fight their own battles, and to settle their own quarrels. If a king can oppress his people, let him. If a people will submit to a tyrant, let them. If they cannot conquer their freedom by themselves, they could not keep it if conquered for them : we will not interpose to confer it as a gift. Whatever nations or sovereigns can do *by their own strength*—whatever they may submit to from their own weakness—concerns us not : neither we as freemen, nor others as autocrats, ought to interfere to prevent it.

But the features of the case are altogether changed when the tyrant reigns *by virtue of the foreign influence* that has placed or replaced him where he is,—when he tears and tramples by means of weapons lent or promised, him by others,—when his subjects could win their freedom easily from *him*, and maintain it against his utmost efforts, but are kept in servitude by force or menace from without,—when they are misgoverned, not because they could not govern themselves, and bind their monarch by constitutional restraints, but because an alien and powerful neighbour steps in and upholds a wretched puppet on the throne, which of himself he could not have defended for an hour. This distinction unmasks at once the fallacy of the reproach that we so often hear launched against us, *viz.* that we remonstrate about the tyrannies of the weak, but are shamefully silent over the equal or greater oppressions of the strong. There is no shame in the matter ; the difference of our proceeding in the two cases is wholly warranted and just. The strong are oppressors in virtue of their

own strength; the weak are oppressors only in virtue of our aid, or sanction, or connivance. If Austria tyrannises over Lombardy and Hungary without foreign help; if the Czar of Russia tramples on his Muscovites; if the government of France treads out liberal institutions and rules Frenchmen with a rod of iron,—it is no affair of ours: they do it by their own might; and we are not charged with the moral police of the terraqueous globe. But it is otherwise with puny and artificial potentates like Ferdinand of Naples: we helped to place him on the throne he has disgraced and stained; he is supported there by the common consent of the great powers of Europe; his subjects are only withheld from curbing or deposing him by the fear or the menace of Austrian interference. Had it not been for foreign influences, his career would have long since come to an end. He has no root in himself; he reigns and sins purely by the countenance and tacit aid of the various sovereigns who were parties to the treaties of Vienna. If we had not carried back his withered dynasty to Naples; if France had not been a party to that unfortunate transaction; if Austria were not always ready to repeat the armed intervention of 1821; if all these States were not so timidly anxious to avoid causes of quarrel and revolutionary explosions,—Ferdinand would never have been at Naples, or would not be there now. It is by our joint connivance, active or passive, that he sways his sceptre; it is, therefore, our joint right to see that he does not turn that sceptre into a tool of torture and a weapon of oppression; and it is our duty to exercise this right if we can, when we can, and as far as we can. The distinction, then, is obvious and just. We have no claims to interfere with the domestic oppressions or family quarrels of the strong, because they are in no sense our creatures,—we did not give them their power, and we are not responsible for the use they make of it; we *have* a claim to protest against and prevent the despotic crimes and cruelties of the weak, because we have made them what they are.

Why, then, some will ask, if this right and this duty are so plain and so imperative, did we restrict ourselves to protest and non-intercourse? Why did we not *compel*, as well as *advise*, Ferdinand to govern with humanity and justice? For three sufficient reasons, which it can do no harm to state openly and plainly. *First*, because we could not have done it without the aid or countenance of France; and France would not join us. Her position at Rome, where she forcibly kept Pope Pius on his throne, and protected him against the general detestation and watching vengeance of his subjects, rendered it almost impossible for her to forbid Austria to perform a

similar kind office for Ferdinand. She feared also, naturally enough, that insurrectionary movements, once excited in Italy, might spread rapidly beyond the Alps. England single-handed, especially with France secretly disapproving, would probably have failed; and failure was not a thing to be thought of. *Secondly*, as we have said, those who hold the reins of power in this country, whatever party they belong to, inherit from their fathers, who lived in 1793, an excessive but not irrational dread and mistrust of popular revolutions,—feelings which their own observation in 1848 went far to confirm; and they would have deemed themselves guilty, had they purchased even the punishment of the King of Naples by kindling the flame of insurrection. *Thirdly*, whatever Ministers might have desired, their position at home gave them no power to act with the requisite boldness and decision. It must in common fairness be remembered, that in five years out of six, the Ministers of Great Britain find themselves in a situation of singular difficulty, which renders it morally impossible for them either to do what they wish, or to say what they think. Hence, however unsatisfactory may be the course pursued, we can never feel sure that they deserve blame for pursuing it, or could reasonably have been expected to pursue any other. At the conjuncture of which we are now speaking, in particular, their embarrassment must have been unusually great. In matters of foreign policy it is usually so. Events occur respecting which they can neither be silent nor inactive without clear dereliction of dignity and duty; yet if they speak strongly, without being prepared to act vigorously, they run the risk of meeting with insult and humiliation. At the same time, neither in language nor in deed are they wholly and truly independent. In order to interpose effectually and beneficially, they must be able to carry with them the full moral weight attaching to a decision of THE NATION; and the state of parties at home renders this always a matter of conjecture and of doubt. Unhappily, it is too undeniable that some of the cleverest men in Parliament are also the most factious, owing either to an incurably perverse intellect, or an inherently mischievous disposition; and Ministers know perfectly well that, whatever line they may take or whatever language they may use, a number of influential and active partisans will be certain to make the line as difficult and the language as inoperative as they can. If the Government are conciliating and enduring, they are taunted with timidity and weakness; if bold and peremptory, they are met by an outcry against meddlesome, warlike, and dictatorial politicians. They may, it is true, obtain the concurrence of the House of Commons; they may triumph even by a fair ma-

jority; but the whole effect of their menaces or their remonstrances is gone;—Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Disraeli has done the work of the enemy; and it is perfectly well understood at Vienna and at Naples, that the British Government speak, not in the name of the resolute and united British nation, but only in the name of the larger *half* of that nation, and of the *temporary* wielders of its power.

Ministers lie under a further difficulty still. The extreme section of the Liberal party—the friends of freedom *par excellence*, those who at home incline to radical and even republican opinions—are precisely those whose views of international policy are the most narrow, selfish, and isolating. They ostentatiously disclaim all wide or generous sympathies. They disown all allegiance to high or noble principles of action. They object to all proceedings of which our own national and pecuniary interests are not the inspiring motive. They will not resent the insults of the powerful, because such assertion of our dignity and honour might imperil our commerce, or add to our taxation. They will not aid or encourage the suffering and the weak, because the woes of others are no concern of ours, and because interposition might involve us in embarrassing and costly complications. Thus the very men on whom a Liberal government ought to be able to rely most confidently for support, are the first to slink away from its side where foreign action is in prospect. The very men who affect the greatest love for popular rights and free institutions at home, are the most unwilling to strike a single blow for them abroad. Thus it constantly happens, that the cause of progress and liberty on the Continent is discouraged and endangered, because, whenever questions concerning it are mooted in our Parliament, the Tory Opposition, which instinctively sympathises with despots, is reinforced by the commercial democrats, who ought to sympathise with peoples; and the unnatural allies are strong enough to paralyse the action and neutralise the influence of genuine Liberals and leading statesmen, who would fain have taken a manlier and kinder course, had they been allowed to do so.

This we believe to be one explanation of that uncertain and unreliable policy which this country has so often pursued in international matters; and which foreigners are in the habit of attributing sometimes to selfish cowardice, sometimes to profound cunning, sometimes to sheer and systematic perfidy; but which simply arises from the deplorable fact, that parties are too much divided in England, and their leaders often too unprincipled in their combinations, and too interested and shortsighted in their views, to permit a consistent and permanent

NATIONAL policy to develop itself. It is impossible for the Government to promise aid to popular efforts in other lands, because it cannot tell whether opposing factions will permit it to carry out its promises. It is impossible for Italian liberals to count upon the language held in Parliament by nearly every statesman of repute and influence, because it is impossible to foresee whether it may not suit Mr. Bright to join Mr. Disraeli in sacrificing Italian prospects for the sake of putting Lord Palmerston in a minority.

In judging of the course of conduct pursued by the Foreign Minister of England, we can rarely feel confident that we have before us all the materials necessary for forming a decision, or that our information is unimpeachably accurate even on the points which we think we have ascertained. Sometimes secret circumstances, known only to the Government and, from particular reasons, not divulgeable by them, throw an entirely new light on the transaction,—a light which is unavoidably hidden from the public. Sometimes an acquaintance with the personal character of our antagonists, which the nation can never possess, suggests a different interpretation for their language, and gives an altogether opposite colour to their actions. Sometimes the whole line of policy pursued is inexplicable, without an insight into national peculiarities and a familiarity with local customs which few at home possess. These remarks apply with tenfold force to affairs which are transacted at the other end of the world, and in which the parties we are dealing with are savages or Orientals. Hence in these cases, whether we praise or blame, we never feel perfectly certain that we are not committing a blunder, or perpetrating an injustice.

In considering the conduct of our Government in declaring war against Persia, we feel ourselves especially under the influence of these impressions. We are conscious of an inherent and incurable incompetency to pronounce with any degree of fitting or comfortable dogmatism. We do not know Mr. Murray, and we do not know Persia; and we find that persons who do know both come to very different conclusions as to the course we ought to have pursued. Some declare that the Persians are a quiet pleasure-loving people, little disposed to action or aggression, and wishing only to live in amity and peace; and that if we would only be mild and courteous, these ever-recurring disputes never would arise. Others, on the contrary, urge that they are arrogant, vain, and encroaching, always bent on humiliating us, and trying how much we shall bear without retaliation. Some believe that Persia is a mere tool of Russia; and seized Herat at the instigation of that

power, and with a view to the furtherance of her ulterior and sinister designs against our Indian empire. Others, again, affirm,—and among these are men well qualified to speak,—that the Shah, foreseeing a war with England when Mr. Murray struck his flag, seized Herat in order to have something to give back—something to bargain with—when he came to negotiate terms of treaty. It may be so; we cannot tell. We incline to believe that in the affair of Meerza Hashim we were wrong; we have no doubt that in promptly resenting the attack upon Herat we were right and prudent. As the matter of the “Mission” quarrel has been represented to us, the facts are these: Hashim had held a post at the Persian court, and had married a lady of the royal family; but having given grave offence, and made an enemy of the Grand Vizier or Suddr Azim, had been not exactly disgraced, but discarded, or in a manner *clouded over*. He is said to have borne no very good character; but he attached himself to the British mission, made himself useful, and was appointed their agent at Shiraz. This selection as a medium of communication with the court-authorities of a discarded or at least disliked courtier, was certainly not very civil on the part of Mr. Murray, but was probably merely a piece of clumsy thoughtlessness. However, as the relations between our embassy and the court of Teheran had not been very smooth previous to Mr. Murray’s arrival and during Mr. Thomson’s *régime*, the Persian ministry were greatly annoyed, and declared that if the Meerza went to Shiraz, at least his wife should not go with him. Mr. Murray declared that the detention of the wife of an *employé* of the British mission was an outrage and a violation of our privileges; and being unable to obtain redress, struck his flag. Now here was, as it seems to us, his second mistake,—committed in ignorance of oriental customs, as his first error was from carelessness of what was due to oriental susceptibilities. In England a wife follows the fortunes, takes the rank, and enjoys the privileges of her husband; she is a sort of property or appendage to him. In the case, however, of a Persian who marries a lady of royal blood, the very reverse of all this is true: the husband belongs to the wife; he is only a species of consort, holding the undignified position of a satellite to his spouse. Meerza Hashim’s wife was just as much a slave, just as much at the command of the Shah, after her marriage as before, according to the immemorial usages of the Mohammedan nations. This fact Mr. Murray seems to have been ignorant of, or to have overlooked. It is true that, prior to this occurrence, complaints of indignities and ill-treatment, endured by the Mission at the hands of the Persian minister, had been numerous and bitter; but we cannot tell how far the affronts complained

of may not have been invited or provoked, either by the imperious tone which our countrymen are too apt to assume, or by mistakes which (as we have just seen) they are too apt to fall into.

So much for the personal dispute. The siege of Herat was a very different affair. It was, to all appearance, a menace; it was a direct infraction of a recent and solemn treaty; and if submitted to, might have ultimately led to very serious dangers. Persia is in a very difficult and uncomfortable position,—unsatisfactory both for us and for herself. She is a weak power situated between two strong ones; alternately truckling to the one which presses her most severely, or leaning to the one which cajoles her most effectually. Russia desires to use her as an instrument wherewith to menace and disturb our Oriental empire. England desires to counteract Russian influence, and to render Persia either friendly to us, or more afraid of us than of our rival. Now it must be admitted that, looking back for thirty or forty years, the policy through which we have endeavoured to produce these effects has not been either very sagacious or very uniform. We have sometimes threatened and sometimes flattered; but we have done neither consistently nor well. We have never assisted Persia very effectually, or injured her very alarmingly. We have not succeeded in making ourselves much loved or much feared. Russia has managed better. She has persuaded Persia that she can be an unscrupulous and ready friend, and has shown that she can be a very formidable enemy. At various times she has robbed Persia of province after province; and the unhappy Shah has never been able to feel that he could rely upon our aid to resist the encroachments of our rival. If we had been at all times ready to perform the duties of a loyal ally, we might have saved Persia from much spoliation; and though we could never have made her a strong power, we might have made her a fast friend; and we might at all events have made her permanently our extreme Indian outpost. This, however, we have shrunk from doing; and have contented ourselves with forbidding her to assail the independence of Affghanistan, and inducing her to promise that she would not. We know perfectly well that if Herat once was incorporated with Persia, it would sooner or later fall virtually or actually into Russian hands. Now, without assuming that Russia entertains distinctly any scheme so wild as an invasion from *Russia* of our Indian dominions, every one feels and admits that the establishment of her troops, or her tools, in a tenable, comfortable, and advantageous position like Herat, would render our government of India a matter of far greater difficulty than at present. We there rule over a number



of native races ; all of them restless, some of them warlike, and not a few very recently subdued. We draw a large revenue from direct taxation, now quietly but reluctantly paid into the hands of our collectors ; and our subjects are for the most part tranquilly submissive, because believing our power to be irresistible. But how long would this state of things continue, if a Russian force were established so near us as Herat, to countenance the agents who would be for ever intriguing to foster discontents and excite disturbances ; and to hamper our anti-Muscovite policy in Europe by keeping our hands full in Asia ? We hold, therefore, that the siege of Herat by the Shah of Persia, in direct violation of his engagements, was a proceeding which fully justified and even peremptorily called for immediate hostilities on our part. And we are confirmed in this opinion by two considerations.

Tenacity, vigilance, quickness to perceive and promptitude to resent injuries or insults, are qualities for which, in dealing with Orientals, it is imperatively necessary to gain credit. These people are usually both ignorant and *slavish*. By this we mean, that they bow to power : they do not bow to justice. Might and Right are confounded in their minds to a degree which, in Western and Christian countries, we can scarcely realise. They are, too, much more governed by *impressions* than we are—just in proportion to their ignorance. They are, as a rule, incapable of estimating the real power of Great Britain, and comparing it with their own. But they can fully estimate, and are duly impressed by, the attitude of a nation that acts and speaks as if it believed itself to be invincible ; that tolerates no slight ; that resents every insult ; that detects and repels every *tentative* aggression ; that punishes every injury and breach of faith without mercy as without exception. Above all, they cannot understand forbearance or concession. The notion of yielding any thing except on compulsion, of enduring any thing except from weakness, of giving up this possession because it was unimportant, or retracing that step because it was unjust,—is one they cannot entertain. They never do such a thing themselves, and they cannot comprehend that others should. If we pass over an indignity, it is because we dare not resent it. If we submit to a wrong, it is because we are powerless to avenge it. It is obvious, that in dealing with people of this nature, we must proceed upon somewhat different principles from those which regulate our intercourse with the civilised nations of the West, who are acquainted with our resources, and are less likely to misinterpret our actions.

Again : in nearly all matters connected with our Eastern Empire, we live upon our reputation. To gain and sustain this

reputation is a cheap and wise economy. Our empire in the East is mainly one of *ideas*. We are a handful of Europeans—probably not 50,000—among 150,000,000 of subject, and not always friendly, races. We are in possession of that Hindoo peninsula which has in all times been regarded as the grand prize of adventurous Asiatic warriors—the El Dorado of the East. We hold it mainly through the instrumentality of the natives themselves—by the influence which we have acquired over their imaginations—by the notion with which we have impressed them of our indomitable energy and our invincible prowess. If this moral ascendancy were once shaken, our empire *might* indeed be retained or recovered; but it would be at a cost of life and treasure absolutely frightful to contemplate. If, by any error or any yieldingness on our part—by concession of any territory—by endurance of any insult to ourselves or our allies—by careless connivance at the infraction of any treaty, we once suffered the Asiatic nations to become possessed with the idea that we were weak, or indolent, or timid, and might be affronted or assailed with impunity, or even with a chance of success,—enemies would spring up like mushrooms on every side; our prestige would be lost; our supremacy would again have to be fought for; and it would require 100,000 European troops to effect that which can now be effected by the quiet word of a British resident or envoy.

The last and most recent illustration of the foreign policy of the present Government which we have to notice, is their conduct on the Chinese Question. This deplorable and sinful affair involves a higher issue, and needs to be argued upon broader grounds, than any hitherto taken by any of the parliamentary disputants who have made it the stalking-horse of party-conflict. It resolves itself into two distinct portions,—the proceedings of our officials at Canton, and the course adopted by Ministers at home. Let us simply recall the main facts of the case; omitting, or giving Sir John Bowring the benefit of, all the points which are doubtful or disputed.

On the 8th of last October, the lorcha *Arrow*, a small trading vessel plying between Hong Kong, Macao, and Canton, and lying at the time in the Canton river and close to the city-walls, was boarded by the Chinese authorities in search of some noted pirates; and twelve of her crew were taken out of her. This, if she were a Chinese vessel, the Chinese authorities were of course perfectly warranted in doing:—this, if she were a British vessel, they were precluded from doing by a treaty bearing date October 8th, 1843, and usually termed the Supplementary Treaty; whereby the Emperor of China en-

gages never to seize, but only to demand from the consul, any Chinese criminals or accused parties on board British vessels, whether merchant-ships or men-of-war. If, therefore, the lorcha were a British vessel within the meaning of the treaty, the Chinese had violated their engagement, and could lawfully be called on for reparation. Consul Parkes, affirming her to be British, immediately demanded the surrender of the men, an apology for the affront, and an assurance that the offence should not occur again. Commissioner Yeh, the Governor of Canton, sent back nine out of the twelve men, against whom in examination nothing could be proved; but replied at the same time that the lorcha was not British, inasmuch as he had ascertained that she was owned by a Chinese. So far good: the whole matter lay in a nutshell; the question was one of disputed fact and disputable law. Was she a British vessel under the meaning of the treaty, or was she not?

We put aside the question as to whether or not the English ensign was flying at the time, and was rudely hauled down by the mandarin who boarded her. The English positively affirm that it was, and bring a considerable amount of testimony in confirmation of the assertion. The Chinese deny this; and their denial is corroborated, as we find from a newspaper published at Hong Kong, called the *Friend of China*, by the evidence of the master and crew of a Portuguese lorcha lying alongside at the time. Probably the ensign was hauled down. The question merges in the former one. If the Chinese believed the *Arrow* to be a British vessel, the hauling down the ensign was of course a flagrant insult. If they conceived her to be a pirate falsely hoisting the British ensign, the case is altogether changed.

Now, was the lorcha a "British" vessel within the intent and meaning of the treaty, or was she not? We do not design to pronounce dogmatically on a question about which real and sincere difference of opinion may exist. We are of opinion that she was not. But,—and here is a point which we think has been strangely overlooked, and yet it is the essential point of the affair,—this much is certain: *the Chinese had ample warranty for assuming, and ample grounds for arguing, that she was not.* It is possible they might be wrong in law; but, at all events, the case is so nice a one, and their plea is so plausible, and *primâ facie* so convincing, that no reasonable man can be surprised at or can blame them for believing and acting as they did. Even if they should ultimately be decided to be in error, the fact remains,—that we have bullied, bombarded, and slain them because they took a different view on a very knotty and doubtful point of law from that which approved itself to our mind.

What, then, are our reasons for coming to the conclusion, with Commissioner Yeh, that the *Arrow* was not a British vessel?

In the first place, we presume it will be admitted that the mere fact of a vessel hoisting a British flag does not make her a British vessel. Ill-disposed vessels carry the flags of all nations for the purposes of deception, and hoist them *pro re natâ*. Pirates, smugglers, slavers, hoist the British flag without the smallest right, solely for the purpose of blinding their watchers or pursuers. If they could thereby secure themselves against question or visit to ascertain their right to carry such an ensign, it would degenerate into a mere cloak and immunity for crime. It is notorious, that many of the lorchas in the Chinese waters—many, we fear, holding a British register and showing a British flag—are engaged in smuggling, and in little else; and if the rumours current on the spot are to be trusted, this very *Arrow* was one of these; and when afraid of being stopped and searched, they run up the Union Jack to save themselves. Do we mean to contend, then, that the Chinese are prohibited by treaty or by international law from *visiting* such vessels, not to detain them or their crew, but in order to ascertain by their papers whether or not they are legally entitled to bear the sheltering flag of Britain? Now when the mandarins boarded the *Arrow*, what did they find? A Chinese crew,—nothing more; for the British sailing-master (a youth of twenty-one, put in to meet the formal requirements of the law) was absent. If they searched further, and examined her papers, they found, or would have found, that she was owned by a Chinese; and that the British register she once held had expired. What was there to make them believe they were wrong in treating her as a Chinese vessel?

But, secondly, granting that she had been empowered to hoist the British ensign, and that her registry had been all in order, would she have been entitled to the privileges guaranteed by the Supplementary Treaty to British vessels? Had Sir John Bowring any authority to invest her with such? Both questions must, we conceive, be answered in the negative. The vessel did not answer the requirements which, under our imperial laws, can alone enable ships to obtain British registers. If those requirements had been altered by the Hong-Kong authorities, this alteration had not been formally sanctioned by the Queen in Council, and was not therefore valid; and the equity and prudence of it had, moreover, been greatly questioned by the legal advisers of the Board of Trade at home. The impropriety, the danger, the injustice, of allowing Chinese vessels, with Chinese crews, belonging to Chinese merchants, to pur-

chase the immunities of the British flag by simply paying down a small sum of money and putting an English master (often a mere boy) on board, are obvious to all, and ought to have withheld Sir J. Bowring from issuing such "letters of license" to possible pirates and probable contrabandists. Well might the Chinese commissioner ask: "Since when has the national flag been deemed of such small account as to be sold to all applicants for money?" Well might he treat a claim to immunity based upon such a patent flaw as a monstrous and inadmissible pretension.

But there is a consideration still more decisive against the claim of the *Arrow* to be considered within the immunities of the treaty. That treaty gave certain privileges to "British vessels;" and could only have been meant by the negotiators, and can only be honestly interpreted to us, to confer these privileges on such vessels as, *under the meaning of the words AT THAT TIME*, were held to be "British vessels,"—not on craft of a wholly different nature, and fulfilling far slenderer requirements, which we in future years and for our own purposes might choose to call such. The justice of this position is too obvious to need enforcing. What, then, in 1843, when the treaty was signed, were "British vessels," not only in ordinary parlance, but in the strict wording of all acts of parliament? Such, *and only such, as were owned and commanded* (if not wholly manned) by British subjects. Such only were British vessels when the treaty was signed;—by such only could the privileges conferred by the treaty on British vessels be legitimately claimed. Sir John Bowring might sell the British flag to as many Chinese lorchas as he pleased, and on any terms he pleased to fix;—he could not bring one of them within the meaning of the treaty.

To sum up the whole facts. The *Arrow* had no British register at the time of her seizure, for it had expired ten days previous. If she had had one, it would have been of questionable validity, inasmuch as the ordinance granting it was in contravention of imperial law, had never been duly authorised by the Queen in Council, and *had not been promulgated when issued* as required by law. And lastly, if the register had been extant, and in all respects formally correct, it could not have conferred the immunities claimed under the terms of the treaty. If the Chinese did not know the first, they knew the last. They were right, therefore, and we were wrong; and all our subsequent proceedings were mere high-handed and unwarrantable violence.

This is bad enough; but there is worse behind. The British name has been disgraced, not by violence only, but by untruth.

The honour of our flag has been stained, not by the Chinese commissioner, but by the English envoy. Almost, if not quite, for the first time since the daring forgery of Clive, has a representative of the British crown stooped to what looks almost like falsehood.\* To our minds this is the saddest part of this whole sad transaction. In all our dealings with Orientals, we have been accustomed to pride ourselves upon our spotless and scrupulous honour. Their habitual faithlessness and chicanery is undeniable; and we have always been accustomed to reproach them with it, and to contrast it with our undeviating integrity. We have now enabled them to cast back the taunt. So hasty were both the consul and Sir John Bowring, that they acted before they had fully ascertained the facts of the case: they made representations and demands on an erroneous assumption; and then, being ashamed to withdraw the one or confess the other, they were not ashamed to uphold their mistake by assertions which they had ascertained to be untrue. It is evident, from a careful perusal of the first few pages of the correspondence in the blue-book, that when Consul Parkes first made his peremptory demand for reparation, *he believed the lorcha to have belonged to a British subject*, and to have had an English master on board at the time of the alleged outrage. He stated as much in plain words in his letter to Yeh; and it was not till he received Yeh's answer, two days subsequently, that he made inquiries, and *found that the Chinese commissioner was right*,—that the lorcha belonged to a Chinese. The ugly fact of the Chinese ownership was discovered by Sir John Bowring about the same time; and the next day the still uglier fact, that the vessel's registry had expired ten days before. One would have thought that the discovery of these circumstances might have made our hasty officials pause at least, if not retrace their steps; or rest satisfied without further action. By no

\* Since the above was in type, we have had our attention called to Mr. Edgar Bowring's letter to the *Times*, of March 14, defending his father from the charge of falsehood, based upon the discrepancy of his two statements,—one contained in his letter to Consul Parkes, dated October 11; the other, dated November 14. We admit that there is considerable force in Mr. Edgar Bowring's representation, viz. that the latter document, alleging that "there can be no doubt that the lorcha lawfully bore the British flag under a registry granted by me," was written in reply to Yeh's assertion, that "the license to carry the said flag had been fraudulently obtained," and was merely designed to reiterate the proposition on which Sir J. Bowring took his stand, viz. that the license was *bonâ fide* and warranted. But still the fact remains, that Sir J. Bowring persisted in demanding reparation for the violation of a legally-protected vessel, in the face of his own admission (privately to his subordinate), on October 13th, as well as on the 11th, that "*such protection could not legally be granted.*" Taken at the best, the transaction was the pleading for damages on the part of the counsel for the plaintiff—the said counsel suppressing the material fact, known only to himself, that damages were not legally due, and arguing and acting as if that fact did not exist.

means. In the *very same letter* in which Sir J. Bowring announces the expiry of the registry to his deputy at Canton, he desires him to grant only forty-eight hours to Yeh to make his submission; failing which, he is then to resort to force. In the same breath, in the same letter, with the same pen, he avows, *totidem verbis*, that the *Arrow* was "not entitled" to the British protection he had claimed for her, and therefore that the treaty guaranteeing such protection had not been violated,—yet demands instant redress for the violation of the treaty, on pain of hostile proceedings! But even this is not the whole. It is impossible to disguise the shameful circumstance that Sir John Bowring, while announcing the truth to Mr. Parkes, thought himself justified in using what was at least an equivocation to Commissioner Yeh. On Oct. 11th, he writes to the Consul: "It appears on examination that the *Arrow* had no right to hoist the British flag, the license to do so having expired on Sept. 27th, since which period she has not been entitled to protection." On Nov. 14th, he writes to the Chinese governor: "Whatever representations may have been made to your excellency, THERE IS NO DOUBT that the lorcha *Arrow* LAWFULLY bore the British flag, under a register granted by me."

The English authorities, then, it seems clear, were wrong in law, wrong in fact, wrong in morals. Of course their plea is—and we were sorry to see that Lord Clarendon endorsed it—that the Chinese knew nothing either of the expiry of the license, or the invalidity of the ordinance under which it was granted; that they intended to break the conditions of the treaty, though, owing to an accident, they failed in doing so; and that the insult designed and committed against the British flag was the same in effect, whether the vessel flying that flag was legally entitled to carry it or not. Now it is possible enough that the Chinese did intend to insult our flag, and violate their own engagements: they are a fierce and arrogant people, and by no means friendly to the English. But we have no right to take their hostile intentions for granted. Not one single fact or expression in the whole blue-book bears out the assumption which Sir John Bowring chooses to make. On the contrary, the whole correspondence on Yeh's part is moderate and logical; and appears to us the simple utterance of a man who had acted *bonâ fide* throughout the transaction, and who was astonished and disgusted at our representations and peremptory demands. He declares, that he considered the *Arrow* to be a Chinese vessel, with no real claim to bear the British ensign; that he had made inquiries since the complaint was forwarded to him, and found that she was a Chinese vessel, and belonged to a Chinese; that on boarding her, no British

captain was found (which turned out to be strictly true); and that he believed then, and believes still, that his officers had done nothing but what by law and treaty they were fully warranted in doing. He further very pertinently but civilly suggests, that in order to avoid such misunderstandings in future, we should abstain from the objectionable and dangerous, and, as he thinks, illegal practice of lending or selling the British flag to foreign ships. All this sounds reasonable enough. As we have said, there *may* have been a *malus animus* on the part of the Chinese authorities; but the papers laid before Parliament bear no indications of it whatever. On the other hand, the *animus* of Sir John Bowring and Consul Parkes—their determination to pick a quarrel, and not to lose the opportunity of settling all accumulated grievances at once—is only too manifest.

The communication of a friendly American to Mr. Cobden throws considerable light upon the matter, and suggests what probably were the real facts of the case. It is notorious, that many of the small vessels plying in those seas are mainly employed in smuggling opium and salt into Canton; and that even those regularly owned and employed by British merchants for discharging their legitimate cargoes do business of this sort occasionally. The American in question mentions a case in which, during the temporary absence of the Chinese war-junks, a whole fleet of these lorchas, &c. went up the river laden with salt,—discharging the salt by night, and *hoisting the British flag by day*. The war-junks, on their return, surprised and captured the whole covey; returning in a day or two those among the offenders who it was found were entitled to carry the protecting and prostituted ensign. In all likelihood this *Arrow* was conceived by the mandarins to be one of these illicit traders, which they were greatly surprised to be told they had no right to visit; and in which, on visiting her, they found nothing to confirm her claim to the character of a British craft.

But let us assume for a moment that the lorcha in question legally bore the British ensign, and that the expiry of her register was an immaterial fact. Admitting that the Chinese really had violated the Supplementary Treaty, and insulted the national colours, what are we to think of the moderation, temper, and justice of our representatives,—of the propriety of the reparation demanded, and the extent of the retaliation inflicted? The demand for a restoration of the men seized, and an assurance that nothing of the kind should occur again, would have been legitimate and fair; and failing to obtain these, the seizure of a war-junk, as Lord Clarendon sanctioned, would have been a fair rebuke and punishment. What, however, was the course taken? Consul Parkes gives the Chinese



commissioner forty-eight hours to comply with his requirements,—viz. to restore the men, to apologise, and to promise good behaviour for the future. Within the forty-eight hours Yeh returns nine of the twelve men; sends copies of depositions against the others, charging them with piracy, as his excuse for not surrendering them also; and waives the apology and the promise, as being demanded under a mistaken impression of the character of the vessel. The consul and the envoy refuse to receive the men, and reiterate their demands and their menace; and, in spite of another letter from Yeh, again detailing the Chinese facts of the case, and promising in future all reasonable and due respect to British lorchas,—but not apologising for a violation of the treaty, which he denied having committed,—they proceed on the same day to open hostilities by the seizure of a large junk. Surely this was enough. But Sir John Bowring had other objects. He immediately made arrangements for warlike operations, attacked and captured the Barrier forts and, three days later, the forts close to the city. In the mean time the Chinese commissioner had reiterated his assurances for the future, and sent back the whole *twelve* men demanded. Consul Parkes *declined now to receive them*, alleging some informality in the mode of surrendering them. The Chinese authorities had now conceded all we asked, except the apology,—which, with their view of the case, they could not give. But Dr. Bowring writes to Lord Clarendon, that the viceroy “shows no disposition to enter on amicable negotiations;” so he proceeds to revive an old demand for free ingress into Canton, bombards the city, shells the governor’s residence, breaches the walls, and storms the place. Of course the Chinese turn upon us; a war begins, and was raging in the Canton river when our last accounts left Hong Kong. We will indulge in no declamation. The bare statement of facts is sufficient. But we cannot forbear from expressing our deep disgust at the tone of Sir John Bowring’s despatches. Any thing so flippant, conceited, and unfeeling, in the way of state-papers, we never read before.

So much for the conduct of the British authorities at Canton. What are we to say of the conduct of the British Government at home? It is clear that they are responsible for these proceedings only in as far as they choose to adopt and defend them. It must be allowed, that they were placed in a very perplexing position. We cannot doubt that their first sentiments were those of condemnation and disgust. It was impossible that in their hearts they should approve of Sir John Bowring’s proceedings, or should not deeply regret them. But what would be the consequence of disavowing them, now

that they were irrevocably done? On the one hand, it was most painful and revolting to high-minded and honourable men to uphold and sanction a course of conduct, pursued by their delegates at the other side of the world, which they felt to be culpable and imprudent, and which they, if consulted beforehand, would have been the last to warrant;—to prosecute an unrighteous quarrel, and insist upon unjust demands,—to embrace a cause which, however good in its essence, was full of flaws in its origin, and had been deplorably stained and soiled by its rash and unworthy asserters at the antipodes. On the other hand, to recall Sir John Bowring, and disavow his high-handed proceedings, would be far from safe, and would inevitably lead to future quarrels and to wider bloodshed. The Chinese, like other Orientals, are wholly unable to conceive the idea of any nation receding from an unjust demand simply on the score of its injustice. Our recession would be attributed to fear and weakness, and would invite and insure new insults, flagrant affronts, and unpermissible pretensions. It would, beyond all question, encourage the Chinese to treat us in a manner which must speedily compel us to inflict terrible and exemplary chastisement. It cannot be denied, that the Celestials, in their ignorant contempt and fanatical hatred of foreigners, have for many years been trying our forbearance to the utmost, and are perpetually affronting and oppressing our citizens to the extreme limits of safety, and in a manner which makes residence there neither agreeable nor safe. All British merchants trading to those quarters, and all who have lived there and are acquainted with the Chinese, with scarcely an exception, rejoice in this quarrel (even where they recognise the rottenness of our special case), as a necessary step to placing our relations with those refined barbarians on a sounder and pleasanter footing; and are strongly of opinion that, right or wrong, Bowring ought to be upheld, the insolence of the Chinese to be chastised, and the sanctity of the British flag enforced. We fully recognise the force of all these considerations; and we are not at all surprised at the influence which they seem to have exercised over the minds of her Majesty's Ministers. We entertain little doubt that the immediate consequences—perhaps the ultimate ones also—of disavowing Sir John Bowring, withdrawing his pretensions, and staying his proceedings, would be worse, both for England and for China, than the consequences of supporting and enforcing the demands made, and vigorously pushing the hostilities already commenced. But feeling all this as strongly as the Government can do, we cannot but think that Ministers, in *defending* Sir John Bowring, have made a sad and most superfluous blunder,—have encumbered them-

selves with an unrighteous plea, and committed themselves to an insincere and untruthful, and therefore an embarrassing line of action. They might, we think, by an opener and bolder course, have saved themselves from the pain of using, and Britain from the pain of witnessing, much disingenuous sophistry. Why should they not have said, distinctly and at once, "Our representative at Hong Kong appears, it is true, to have acted hastily, harshly, clumsily, and wrong: we must have fuller knowledge before we can either approve or condemn him. But the mischief is done; we must get out of a bad business in the best way we can; we must stay all further proceedings, if the Chinese will let us, but we must not waive any just ground of complaint we have against them; and, while withdrawing indefensible ones, must insist once for all upon a settlement which can stand. We must do this out of regard to the Chinese themselves, who assuredly will otherwise compel us to far heavier reckoning ere long. We will be as forbearing and moderate as possible,—as men are bound to be who feel that their first steps in the affair were erroneous and blamable. We shall therefore send out instantly a competent ambassador, with full powers to terminate the disastrous strife on such terms as, when amply informed on the spot, he shall deem just and wise, and shall find feasible." By such a course and such language, we should have escaped that deplorable forensic spectacle of senators and ministers saying what they don't think, and defending what they don't approve, which is so destructive of reverence and confidence in public men. They have virtually adopted this course and this language since their defeat: had they adopted them before, that defeat would have been avoided.

In conclusion, let us beg special attention to what appears to us the weighty moral of the whole matter. Our representatives, military, consular, and diplomatic, who are stationed in distant quarters of the globe, are necessarily intrusted with large discretionary powers, and incur a responsibility corresponding in degree. Their instructions, however carefully drawn up, can scarcely provide for all possible contingencies; and even if they could, much confidence must yet be reposed in their judgment for determining when these contingencies have actually occurred. Cases must frequently arise when the honour of the British flag, the security of British citizens, and the interests of British trade, require spirited remonstrances, peremptory demands, and even prompt and unhesitating action. They cannot refer home for orders;—if they did, the time for remedy and reparation would be past. In dealing with semi-civilised and oriental nations more especially, every thing depends upon the rapidity with which the demand for redress

follows the injury, and the retaliation the refusal of redress. If every instance of outrage or injustice had to be represented to her Majesty's Government for decision and directions, six months would often elapse before any thing was done; and six months of impunity to a savage or an eastern monarch would seem like an eternity, and would confirm him in his oppressive and contemptuous behaviour. It would be impossible, and most undesirable, thus to tie the hands of our delegated authorities. We must give them ample powers, and trust them to use those powers with judgment and forbearance.

At the same time, having appointed and instructed them, it is almost equally necessary to support them. If they are liable to be disavowed,—if we condemn and reverse their proceedings, refuse to endorse their demands or to ratify their agreements, on any but the weightiest grounds and except in the rarest cases,—we do even more mischief than if we had conferred upon them no discretionary powers at all. We render their action scrupulous, timid, and hesitating; and deprive their remonstrances and menaces of the weight without which they will, in the majority of cases, be utterly unavailing. Foreign potentates and people soon cease to regard or fear them; for they can never feel confident that they are acting in conformity with the sentiments, and will be backed by the whole power, of the imperial authority which sent them. So obvious are these considerations, and so cogent have they always been regarded by our Government, that instances in which we have disavowed even the rashest and most questionable proceedings of our representatives abroad are almost infinitely rare. It has become almost a maxim, that, whatever they do, they must be upheld and sanctioned;—they are treated, in fact, as an impetuous colonel, who has, without or against orders, entangled his regiment or brigade in a premature or undesirable conflict with the enemy, is treated by the general in command: he is cursed for his folly; but he cannot be left to perish, or to draw the disgrace of defeat upon the flag, so other troops are pushed forward to support him, and the action, which his superiors would fain have avoided, becomes general. The result is, that a considerable portion of our foreign policy is liable to be determined, not at home, but on distant stations,—not by the prime minister in London, but by the admiral in the Gulf of Mexico, by the ambassador at Teheran, or the superintendent of trade at Hong Kong.

To a very great extent, we admit that all this is inevitable. We must give our representatives ample powers to speak and act on our behalf; and we must support them in the exercise—even in the unwise and condemnable exercise—of those powers,

except where the want of judgment has been so flagrant that the mischief of endorsing is greater than the mischief of reversing their proceedings; or where their conduct has been so clearly unrighteous, that it would indicate a deficiency of the moral sense to sanction or defend it. Sometimes, indeed, as in the present instance, disavowal would come too late, and recession is simply impossible. War has broken out; and we cannot afford to be beaten in a contest, even though it be one into which we ought never to have entered. What, then, is the conclusion to which all these considerations point? What, but that the choice of the men to whom we confide such enormous and undefined powers, and whom we place in such *arbitrative* positions, ought to be the one function of the supreme Government to be exercised with the most conscientious care, with the most scrupulous purity, and under the most solemn feeling of responsibility; and that no condemnation can be too strong for the minister who jobs these appointments, or who allows himself to be influenced in making them by the desire to serve a friend, to reward a political adherent, or to neutralise a political opponent; or, indeed, who considers any thing except the character of the man, and his moral and intellectual qualifications for the post. It is true, that bad selections bring ample retribution to the selector; but this is no consolation and no atonement for the woes and shame they inflict upon the country.

Now, what is the truth in this matter? Is it not that our diplomatic servants, from the lowest to the highest branches of the service, are appointed with less regard to fitness, desert, or capability, than any other class of public officers; more at hazard,—more as a matter of favour,—more from considerations of political or family connection? Nay, is it not notorious, that the more distant the station (and therefore the more critical and hazardous), the more careless and impure are the appointments? We all know the moves and influences by which remote embassies and consulates are filled up. We are not so bad as we were in this respect, but we are bad enough in all conscience still. We know that the opinion which foreign nations form of us is mainly based upon the character and conduct of those whom we send out to represent us and act for us,—of our ambassadors and their *attachés*;—yet the emptiest young men of family are considered specially qualified for the latter, and the former are almost always selected for rank and party ties. We have had ample experience that wars may be prevented or precipitated by the judicious and conciliatory, or the rash and arrogant, behaviour of our residents at foreign courts;—that on the choice of these depend often thousands

of lives, millions of money, oceans of glory or of shame ; yet it is scarcely too much to say, that, except when the gravity of some dangerous crisis startles us into care and conscience, we habitually appoint our envoys and plenipotentiaries with less caution, less sense, and less integrity than we should employ in selecting a coachman for our wife, or a tutor for our son. We could point to a long list of names in verification of our statement, were it not that we should impart too personal a character to our pages ; but when we can point to Sir John Bowring as plenipotentiary in China, with Mr. Chisholm Anstey as his legal adviser, we need go no further for an illustration. Yet these men were appointed by some of the best and most esteemed of our ministers. Their sponsors were Lord Aberdeen, Lord Palmerston, Lord John Russell, Lord Clarendon, and Sir William Molesworth.

One concluding word on the Chinese dispute. The apparently principal object of Sir John Bowring's war,—an object which our statesmen have stipulated for by treaty, and which all English residents at Canton seem most earnestly to desire,—is, the right of free ingress into the city and the interior. We cannot, of course, pretend to place our opinion in hostility to that of numbers whose local or official position should qualify them to arrive at a sounder judgment ; but we cannot avoid thinking, that a remembrance of our Indian history should render us less urgent for a beginning which may terminate in a repetition of that singular catastrophe. The admission of energetic Europeans into the country of stagnant and feeble Asiatics is like the letting out of water. Quarrels occur between insolent natives and reckless Englishmen : the Chinese authorities allege the fear of these and their consequences as their reason for deprecating our admission into Canton. Very probably the natives are in the wrong in these quarrels : at all events, we think so, and we demand reparation and amends. The next step is, to require,—reasonably enough,—some *pied-à-terre* where we may intrench and protect ourselves. Fresh disputes lead to an introduction of British soldiers, and an enlargement of the said *pied-à-terre* for their accommodation. Renewed quarrels entail repeated indemnities and satisfactions ; which at first are pecuniary, and in time territorial. The natives become alarmed at our gradual encroachments : they attack us, are worsted, and are compelled as a penalty to surrender some further desirable or coveted locality. They quarrel among themselves, and one party asks our aid : we give it in an evil hour, and become a native *puissance*. Henceforth our course is inevitable, as it was in Hindostan. Aggrandisement is forced

upon us. We advance; we absorb; we protest; we become lords-paramount;—at last we find we have a new empire to govern at the distance of twelve thousand miles. Bearing in mind, then, both the recent past and this “looming” future, we say that we ought resolutely to forbid any step, and to resist any temptation, which can by possibility lead to our acquisition, by treaty or by seizure, of one single square-yard of Chinese soil. Abjure, as suggestions of the devil, those wild dreams of ambition which have already begun to inflame some imaginations,—which would place our seat of empire at Simlah or Delhi, and extend its boundaries from the Persian Gulf to the Yellow Sea.

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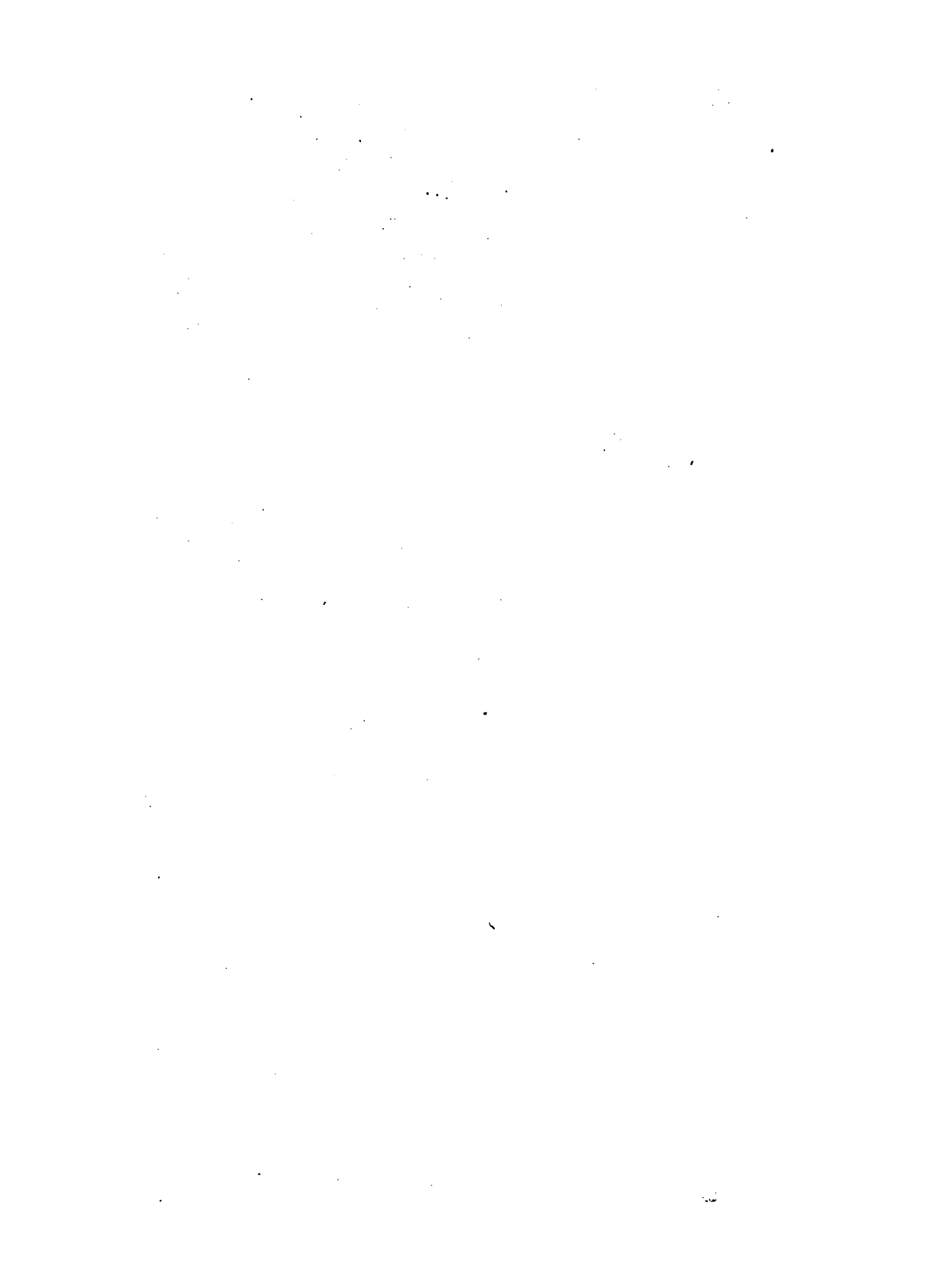
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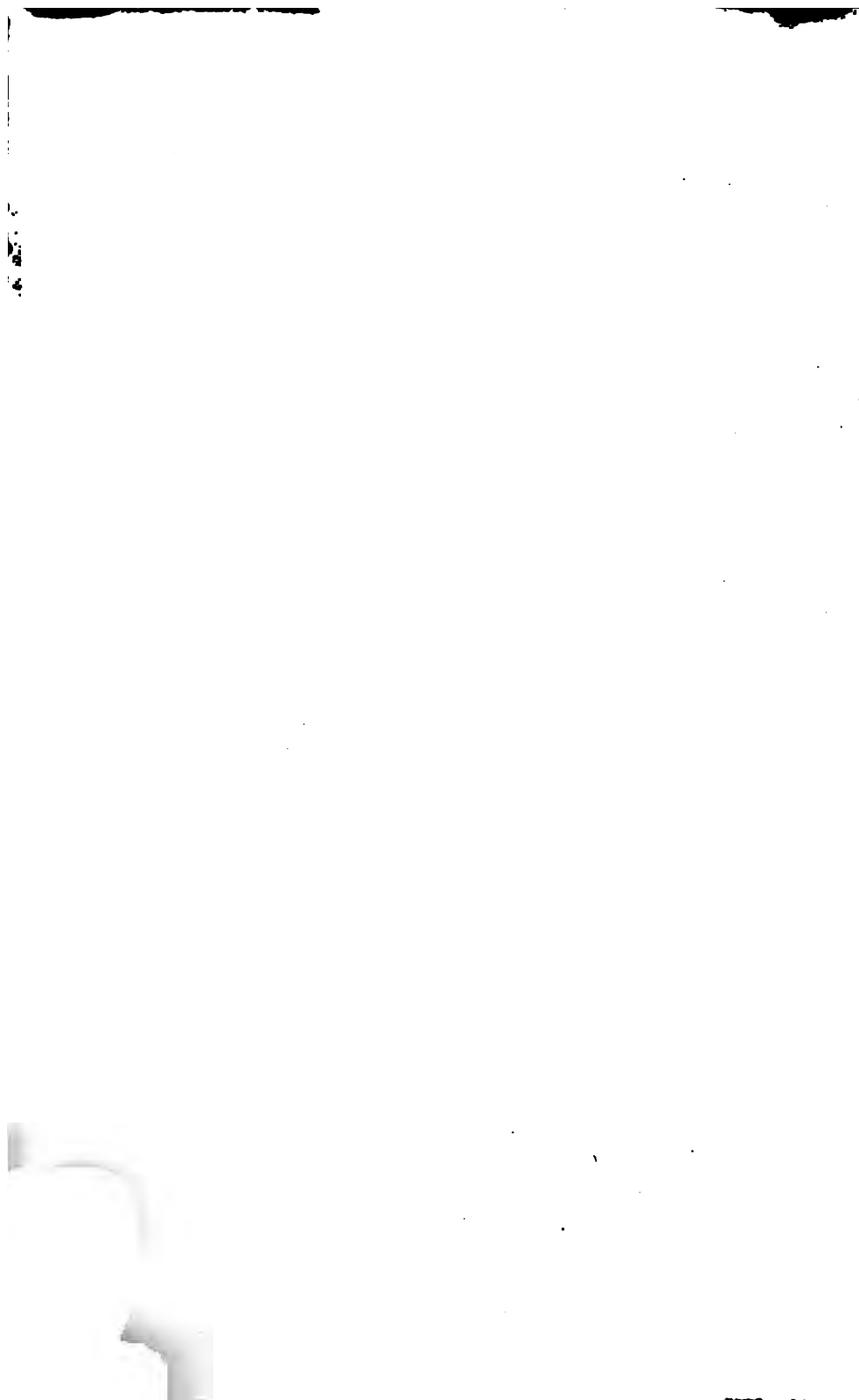
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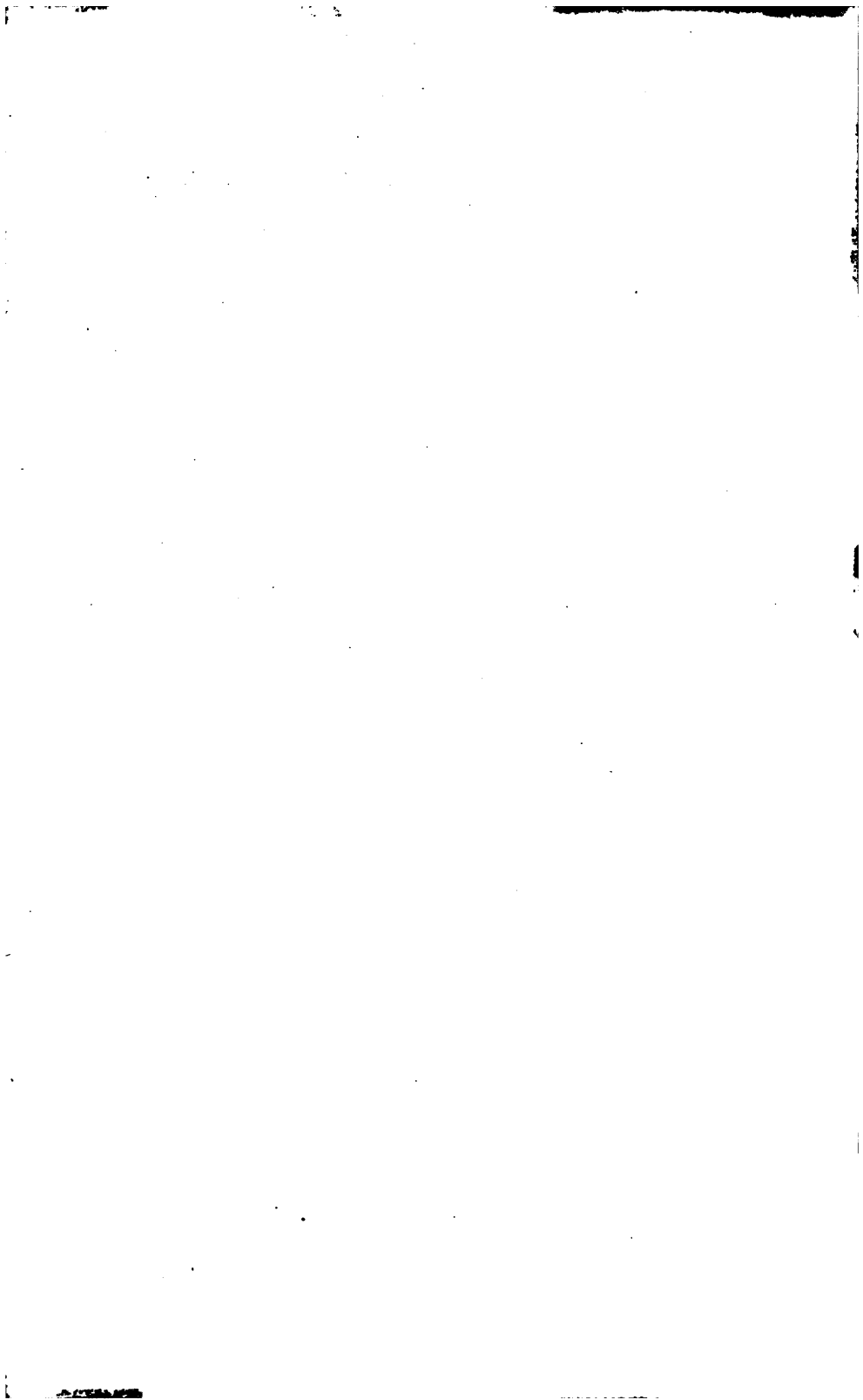
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